Glad Tidings

January/February 2000

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GLAD TIDINGS challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally and internationally.

GLAD TIDINGS through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired and motivated to action.

GLAD TIDINGS provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS (WD) or by the Editor.

Inside: Taking Mission to New Heights

Written in Love

L. June Stevenson, Editor

January 2000

On Screwdrivers and Stewardship

I have a friend who knows everything. At least I think she does. She would be more modest. She knows everything about how a house works - from the kind of moulding to why the toilet won't flush. Until recently I didn't know the difference between a Phillips screwdriver and a square head.

A recent example. She came to help me paint walls and put my house in order. We work together well, a throwback to the days we shared an apartment when teaching in Kingston.

"Don't touch that outlet," she warned (after I tried to remove the plate with a screwdriver and felt a mild shock). "It's a live one. We have to turn off the power." She proceeded to go to the fuse box and give me a lesson on electricity. She then took the light fixtures out of the ceiling to prepare for painting. I would have painted around them.

"You paint the edges first," she said, when the ceiling was done, "then the walls. That way you don't risk getting paint on the ceiling." She painted the edges and I rolled the walls, under her direction.

Then I tried painting the edges. After all I needed to know these things, being the owner of a house. My first try was a disaster. "Use a slanted brush," she told me. "Get the feeling of the brush and let it work for you." I did. And it worked.

"We could do a TV show together", I remarked. "*Sue and June Paint Houses*. I ask the questions. You give the answers, and we do the work together."

"How come you know so much about everything?" I asked. I already knew the answer.

Sue has made a career out of running a household. Way back, she and her husband divided their roles. Harry would work outside the home, and Sue would work inside. (That included the lawn and garden, of course, with Harry's help.)

When we lived together she helped me with sewing. More often, she did the work. She made a bridesmaid's dress for me out of deep pink velour. I made the hat. When I was married, she made my dress (I made the veil), her dress and the flower girl's. "Piece of cake", as the kids would say.

When the children were little we traded their clothes. Most of hers, she had sewn. We exchanged Christmas gifts for the children. In those days I was into sewing dolls and animals. Our children still have some of those creations. I borrowed the maternity clothes she had made when I was pregnant. (Luckily, she got pregnant ahead of me.)

Baking, for Suzanne, is another piece of cake (pardon the pun)! It's nothing for her to whip up six dozen meat pies for the church bazaar, while just making one pie is a challenge for me. At my mother's 90th birthday party, she easily provided a tray of assorted cookies and squares, "just a few things she had around." In fact, she is so good, she has a successful catering business on the side.

"Wow!" is about all I can say. "But," she replies, "you have such a way with words.

You always know the right thing to say or write for a special occasion. I can never think of things like that. Even my handwriting is illegible these days. And you always think of such unique gifts. Like the time you gave Tim (her eldest, my god-son), on the first Christmas he was married, a framed sample of his first crayon scribble. I can't believe you kept it all these years."

Sue's right. She has gifts, but so do I. They may be very different, but they're all very valuable in the scheme of things. We appreciate each other's gifts. And we take advantage of them.

Isn't that what group and congregational life should be about? Why ask Jane to be the treasurer when she can't balance her own cheque book? Why not put her on the newsletter where she can use her skills of writing for the local newspaper? Why ask Joe to teach Sunday School if he feels uncomfortable around children. Perhaps he'd rather be leading the adult study group.

Let us not only appreciate each other's gifts but use them so that the tasks we do in the church, to the glory of God, get done more efficiently, more cheerfully, and maybe even better than we ever imagined. It's not only good stewardship. It's a great use of our time and talents.

The Wisdom of Hildegard of Bingen

Visionary of the 12th Century

The first in a series of articles on early women who influenced Christian thought

by Maria Stam

More than twenty years ago ecologists began to examine our relationship with the earth. They recognized that an increased dependency on science and technology had alienated us from the natural world. Research led them back to the 11th and 13th centuries and the discovery of the mystics. Their writings reflect an exceptional insight into a spirituality which is based upon the whole of creation.

One of these was Hildegard of Bingen who was born in the Rhine Valley of Germany in 1098. As a child she was taken to a Benedictine monastery. When she was fifteen years old, she entered the Community. From the age of 38 until her death in 1179, she was abbess of the monastery. During this time she founded two more convents in other places in the Rhine Land of which one still exists today.

Blessed with the gifts of vision and prophecy, she was also very creative. Her interest in medicine led to a study of herbal plants and their healing power. Up to that time the names of medical plants and their usefulness had been passed orally from one generation to the next. For the first time, they were listed and described in Hildegard's two works *Physica* and *Causea et Curae* (Healing and Cause), partly written in Latin and German.

She also wrote about seventy poems and many pieces of music and made artistic drawings of her images and visions of God and the church. Her talents brought contact with church and world leaders. She gained

th[illegible]pport of Bernard of Clairvaux, a strong reformer of his day. Her prophetic gift, expressed in her greatest work *Recognize the Ways of the Lord*, written around 1150, was affirmed by Pope Eugenius 111, who also encouraged and protected her. The Church never found her views heretical.

Hildegard's image of God is tender and feminine: "We must drink from the breast of God. Justice is to be found in the breast of God and we must draw from this source."

The following quotations give us an impression of her belief in the sacredness of all things: "In nature, God established humankind in power. We are dressed in the scaffold of creation: in seeing - to recognize all the world, in hearing - to understand; in smelling - to discern; in tasting - to nurture; in touching - to govern. In this way humankind comes to know God, for God is the author of all creation."

She did not live in isolation behind the walls of the monastery (this was before the word convent came into common use), but went out to public places and preached in front of the clergy and the people, never afraid to warn against the vices of her time. Her calls for penance lived on in the people for several decades after her death. Her views were not always made in agreement with authorities; she fought for her right and independence.

This was especially true when she sought permission to build two more monasteries because she needed the space to accommodate the many women who wanted to join in the work. She overcame difficulties with great courage and conviction, sharing her experiences in her writings and providing directions to master problems and how to meet the needs at hand.

Today we are amazed when we look at the many obligations Hildegard took upon herself. Aside from work as an abbess and writing her practical experience in natural science, she corresponded extensively and traveled widely, which was dangerous and strenuous. In spite of her many tasks, she never forgot to care for the poor and to attend to people who came to her for advice and healing.

> "We must drink from the breast of God. Justice is to be found in the breast of God and we must draw from this source."
>
> Hildegard of Bingen

Hildegard lived prior to the Renaissance, a time of turbulence and strife between Church and world leaders. Although she was a strong, determined woman, she was also plagued by self-doubts, especially in her younger years. She questioned whether her visions were genuine and her decisions correct. Guided by a strong faith and trust in God, she followed her conscience, even if it meant taking risks. Her determination to act in truth can encourage us when we feel inadequate confronting problems of our time.

Hildegard had to go through a bitter test when her community was placed under interdict by the Church because she refused to exhume the body of a knight she had cared for in his illness, and had buried on monastery grounds. She did not want to break the burial promise given before his death. He was however condemned by the Church and therefore had not died as a member in good standing (traditionally referred to as a state of grace). The Community consequently was not allowed to receive the sacraments and say the prayers of the church.

This ordeal undermined Hildegard's health and half a year after the interdict was lifted, she died at the age of eighty-one.

"All things are related and all things are one."

She was convinced that her knowledge and experiences were the results of divine inspirations. In her view all humans are God's co-creators: "God gave to humankind the talent to create with all the world." This means that as co-creators we are responsible not only for the continuation, but also for the preservation of creation. In another place she says, "Creation would become totally black if in any way the Godly command is shirked." And in still another place, "Creation blooms and flourishes when it remains in right relationship and keeps to its assignment."

More than 800 years have passed and only now we rediscover Hildegard of Bingen and listen to what she has to say to us. In her visions she saw what was going to happen to the earth because of our neglect. Now she invites and encourages us to look at the whole of creation from a different perspective and accept that, "All things are related and all things are one."

Note: Although not yet canonized, Hildegard has been beatified, and is frequently referred to as St. Hildegard. She has her own feast day, September 17, especially recorded in Germany. Hildegard's music is undergoing a revival and enjoying huge public success. Unfortunately, the New Age movement has hijacked some of her visions and music.

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Maria Stam is a freelance writer from London. She is the author of several books and has had many articles and poems published.

Ye Gods

(Jeremiah 10:5)

Images of
molten gold,
hammered silver,
shrouded in sappharine
and violet,
deaf mute, lame,
laughable,
like scarecrows in a cucumber patch.

Joan Dower Kosmachuk

Two poems by Lini Richarda Grol...

Credit and Debit

TOMORROW
is the child of yesterday,
it is the seed
of yesteryear's blossom.

It is the sum total
of our ancestors,
with a large mortgage
on our future.

It is an unmeasurable
and unpaid debt for
love and kindness
too much taken for granted
and leaving us with
a solid obligation,
to pass it on
as it once was given to us.

Of Growing and Being Old...

The pace becomes slower
the head bends lower
The hands are less sure
and voices grow often demure.
That is growing old.

The dreams of the old
for their future, less bold,
the demands for life less wild
their answers grow quieter and mild
That is growing old.

To have grown old is
to feel less tall and even small,
For having no rights at all
and having to do as being told
that truly is the worst of being old.

A Journey of Faith

by Al Connor.

Abram paused at the courtyard door, lost in thought. To his right the city of Ur stretched toward the horizon, its famous temple tower faintly shadowed by the afterglow of a setting sun. On the left hand the plain appeared as a broad sea tinted with colors of apricot, rose and blue.

Camels and livestock were corralled for the night, tents and household baggage packed, preparations for the journey complete at last. He and Sarai, in the company of his father and nephew, would set out for Haran at dawn's first light. But the thought of that distant place stirred afresh questions about the whole venture. A small doubt arose like a white cumulus cloud in a clear blue sky.

Life had treated him well in Ur. He now conducted much of his father's lucrative business as local agent for the camel caravans that traveled to Syria; the profits from that trade provided a comfortable living. He could boast of a solid burnt-brick house, a retinue of servants and a name well known in the market place. His ancestors generations back had roamed the desert with their flocks and herds but he took pride in being a city man, born and raised. To exchange a settled urban life for a nomadic existence hardly appealed. And where was he going? Haran was the first stop. He didn't know what lay beyond - perhaps a journey to the ends of the earth. Not a pleasing prospect for someone of his advancing age.

His friends and neighbors and even some of his relatives hadn't helped either; they questioned him about his religion and treated him with contempt. What deity could be greater than Nannar, the moon god, who drew worshippers from afar to the local temple? And what about the traditional family gods? Weren't they good enough?

Yet the call had come so clearly; there was no mistake. The Lord had said, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you."[1] A shiver ran down his spine. The God of eternity, promise maker and promise keeper, had spoken to him, Abram. What were Nannar and the family gods in comparison but dumb idols? Even the pull of the city began to recede. Doubts disappeared. He would take the Lord at his word.

He breathed deeply. His eyes swept the horizon again as if to record in his very being a lasting impression of the homeland he was about to leave. Then he closed the courtyard door and walked toward the house as a smile played at the corners of his mouth.

And what have you to fear, oh timid Christian? If God has asked you to venture forth then set your mind at rest and go. If God has opened a new door of service, walk through it. If God has given you a fresh vision for your church

or home or job, translate it into reality. Faith, that clear assurance of things unseen, prompted Abram to leave first Ur, then Haran. The Promised Land awaited. The Author of that faith blessed the patriarch's response. It can be so for you. He is the same Lord yesterday and today and forever. [2]

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1. Genesis 12:1,2
2. Hebrews 13:8

Scripture take from the Holy Bible, New International Version. Copyright 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers.

Prayer for the coming year...

The promise: God will empower your suffering with grace.

The prayer: Gentle Lord, St. Paul has told us that 'there is no limit to the blessings which God can send us, and that he will make sure that we will always have all we need for ourselves in every possible circumstance...'*. Here and now, may I take this precious covenant to heart my Lord, that I may always be assured, in every challenge that I face, that there will never be anything that I can't overcome with the strength and the providence of faith.

I ask this, in Jesus' holy name. Amen.

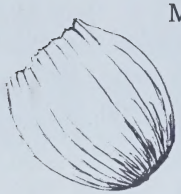
Roberta G. McClelland

(adapted from 2 Cor. 9:8, Jerusalem Bible)

Roberta G. McClelland is a religion writer from London, ON who has been published in Christian magazines throughout Canada and the United States. She is presently pursuing a combined degree in Theology and Pastoral Studies. She is pictured at right with Harley. This is the first in a series of prayers for daily living..

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

Surprised by Beauty



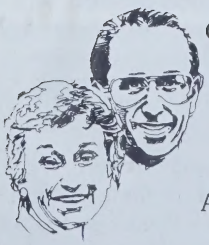
Taking the lid from the garlic holder
Intent on filling it with a fresh lot
My eye fell upon something small and sere,
Nestling in the darkness,
Waiting to be discovered.

Tissue thin, transparent white
Veins radiating outward to the edge
As fine and delicate as gossamer silk
And almost as fragile!

Shaped like a tiny iris petal
Ruffled outer edges in the manner of carnations
Yet where it had narrowed down
To join its clove
A soft blush of rosy pink diffused.

To think that the skin of a garlic bud
Could hold such exquisite beauty
Encouraged me to think of other things
That give me pleasure in the most
Unexpected places.

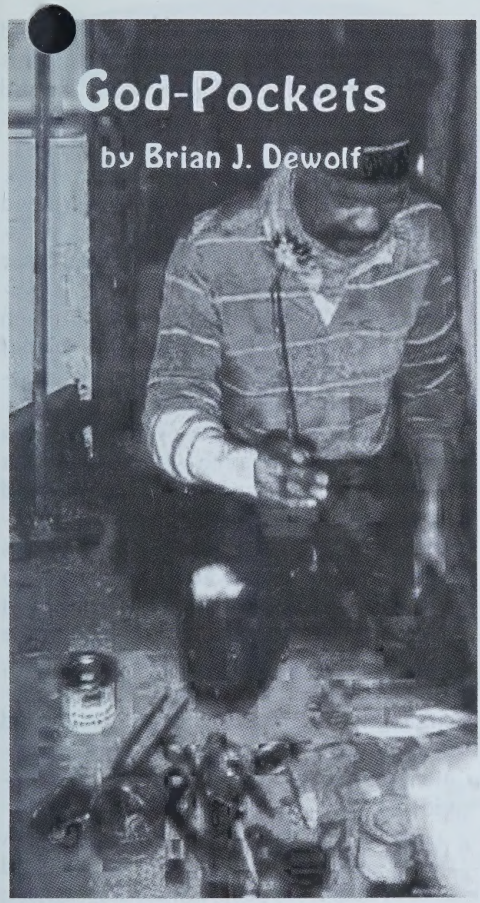
Stars on a clear night
Clouds and storms
Tree shadows tracing delicate patterns
On sequin covered snow
Fog frost on bushes
Sparkling like diamonds in the sun.



The trust in babies' eyes
Or the intricacy of a baby's small hand
The intensity of children at play
Flexible lithe bodies of young athletes
The hard curve of a muscular arm
Old people's faces wrinkled
With laugh lines
And happy eyes revealing their wisdom.

These are a few of the beautiful things
That surprise me with joy.
Thank God I can see!

Helen Smith



Kaelitcha, South Africa. 1.5 million people living in homes smaller than my bedroom. The walls of the "houses" were cardboard, wood planks, strips of steel, anything that had surface area that could provide some sort of protection from the hot sun, or the wet rain. The houses stretched for miles along the side of a highway. Farther than the eye could see, they kept going and going, stuck close together, like cards in a deck.

I slowly turned around in a full circle, letting this world become a reality in my life, accepting that this place was real, and these people were actually here. My mind began to ask questions. Not the sort of questions one might expect from this experience, like "Why would God allow this?", but the kind of questions that put me in the place of someone who lived here. "Where would I go to the washroom?". There were none in the actual houses, so where did 1.5 million people go?

"What if I needed some privacy, some time away from my family, and friends to try and figure myself out, sort through hardships, or be alone with God? There were no places of privacy for miles. "What would I do if I needed to buy food?" There were no supermarkets anywhere near this place.

"What if I wanted to go on vacation, experience another province or country?" But these people can't even afford a bicycle, much less a car, or a plane ticket. Their prospects of even getting a job are slim to none with the unemployment being at least 50 percent. On and on, these simple questions filled my mind.

One would think that I would start to despair, to ask, "Why isn't God here?". But that isn't what I was thinking, because as we travelled through that community, little "God-pockets" started to pop up. Rosie, a caring woman of the community runs a soup kitchen in the midst of that poverty. The people can go to a local church and get a coupon that says, $.60, and bring it to Rosie. They receive a hot bowl of soup and rice. Rosie then takes the coupons she has collected, brings them to the church and gets the money for them. She feeds 400 people a day, half of them children.

Then there are the six women of Kaelitcha who applied to the government for funds to buy a brickmaking machine. They were granted the funds, and now have a business, making and selling cement bricks. They feed their family from the money they get. The people who can actually afford to buy their bricks (which are

cheaper than in the stores in the cities) can actually start making a house of cement rather than cardboard.

Finally, there was Golden, a man who takes waste, and makes flowers from it. All those pop cans that we throw out provide a living for this artistic man. He cuts shapes and bends them, and when he is done, there is a beautiful flower, complete with a stem and leaves. Roses, daisies, tulips and more. He feeds his wife and five daughters on the income.

Where did he get the idea? God sent him a dream, every night, telling him to go to the dump and find what it was that God wanted him to do. Finally he obeyed, and now he is doing all right. And even in his poverty, even with his large family, he still gives ten percent back to his church, back to God.

Wholly Known

The Creator made me
completely;
Jesus knows me
totally;
The Spirit fills me
entirely;
God loves me
altogether.

Joanna M. Weston

Jesus tended to the needs of the people. He healed them, he fed them, he comforted them. In essence, he loved them as a mother or father does. In this community, I see God working in real ways. I see Jesus raising up the afflicted, trying to break through the life of poverty that in many ways has been forced upon these people by the history of a racist government.

Back in Chicago, during our five days of debriefing, we had to work on a project in groups. The group I was in was assigned the problem of Kaelitcha and the 1.5 million poverty stricken people. Our task was to try and find ways to help these people, to raise the community to be self-sufficient instead of dysfunctional. We worked for eight hours, talking through ideas, researching the soil for possibility of agriculture, looking at the communities around them, finding resources that non-governmental organizations might be able to provide.

In the end we came up with a plan. A fairly unrealistic one, and one that required a lot of help from people in the surrounding communities and people overseas, like us. I believe God still makes miracles happen. That takes care of the "unrealistic" part. All that is left over, is the help from other people...

I would like to thank the Women's Missionary Society for their help in sending me on this experience. Trips like these can not help but change a person's life. Mine has been changed, and though I still struggle with what I've seen and learned, it is true that life is not life without struggle. For as Jesus said, "Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?" (Matthew 6:25b)

IN MEMORIAM

Barbara Joan Woodruff

Barbara Joan Woodruff died on November 3, 1999 at Sunnybrook Health Science Centre, Toronto, Ontario after a courageous battle with cancer. A service of Remembrance and Celebration was held November 10 at Iona Church, Toronto with Rev. Jim Biggs officiating.

Born in Kearney, Ontario, she attended Kearney Public School, Burk's Falls High School and Business School in Peterborough. She worked briefly in Nephton for a mining company, and a lawyer in Huntsville, then decided on a career in ministry.

For almost 40 years, Barbara faithfully served the Church as a Diaconal Minister. After graduating from the Missionary and Deaconess Training School in 1958, Barbara was designated as a deaconess in St. Andrew's Church, Huntsville.

She began her ministry as a Director of Christian Education in Knox Church, Goderich. In 1962 she became Regional Secretary to the Synod of Alberta, and five years later she transferred to the Synod of Hamilton and London to continue as a Regional Secretary in that area.

After serving in Central Church, Brantford, and studying Adult Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Barbara returned again to Regional work in 1972 when she became the Area Educational Consultant for Manitoba and North Western Ontario and Saskatchewan.

Barbara faithfully represented the Women's Missionary Society wherever she went, introducing people to its programs and purposes.

Barbara served on many committees, one of them being Education for Mission, Friendship Press, New York. For 17 years she traveled to meetings in the United States, Canada and Mexico. She was always ready to give leadership, or to do any necessary tasks, no matter how difficult or mundane, from taking minutes to giving reports, reading manuscripts, and previewing audio-visuals.

When study books were published, Barbara prepared materials to assist adult groups in their use of the current study.

Barbara had many interests, both in her work and in her personal life, ranging from human rights to feminism, storytelling to theatre, symphony to good reading.

Barbara participated in a study/travel seminar to the USSR in 1987, and in 1992 she attended the 70th Anniversary of Women's work in the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, visiting church related projects in Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Barbara was a true educator, skilled in Christian Education and adult leadership. Her heart and soul was with the people at the local level in women's groups and congregations. She expected and encouraged the best from individuals and groups.

Her wit, wisdom, hard work and her quiet witness will be missed by all who knew her. Barbara leaves behind one sister Charlene (Lorne), two brothers Loren (Kathleen) and Calvert "Kelly", and many nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her brother Ross "Bud".

Adult Bible Education Project

Compiled by Bernice Shih and Merle McGowan

For some time there has been concern that few adults in our churches are involved in any kind of biblical adult education. The Education in the Faith Advisory Committee of The Presbyterian Church in Canada decided to evaluate this whole issue.

Under the leadership of Dorothy Henderson and Erin Crisfield, the committee asked individuals in four cities across Canada to create new programs for adult Biblical education. Keeping in mind that adults have different learning styles, the volunteers set out to implement programs or "Bible Paths" that would excite adults to learn more about the Bible.

Three Bible Paths were considered:
(1) activities one can pursue individually;
(2) one-time social events that can be done with other people;
(3) on-going programs that are done in groups.

After an initial orientation, the volunteers developed the following ideas for individual adult Bible education:
- Reading the Bible using a devotional guide (i.e. *These Days*, the *Canadian Bible Society Bible Reading Guide*);
- Reading the Bible to your children;
- Memorizing Bible verses;
- Watching Bible videos;
- Reading books about the Bible;
- Writing poems about the Bible;
- Reading Lenten devotionals;
- Being involved in a mail-out Home Bible Study.

The prospect of participating in one-time events with other people proved more exciting:
- Movie night for the congregation (i.e. *The Apostle, Godspell*);
- Bible Games Night;
- Bible Jeopardy Night;
- Bible Bingo;
- The Bible and Church Art (a tour of churches with stained glass windows);
- Bible Tool Time (learning about books that help in Biblical research);
- Presentation on How the Bible Came to Be;
- Pot Luck Supper and Bible Drama Night;
- The Bible and Church Music Concert;
- How to read the Bible to your children;
- An intergenerational supper with discussion on Bible stories (the congregation would divide into small groups and meet in homes).

The third Bible Path was on-going group activities and these involved more time commitment:
- Bible studies based on the Lectionary;
- Kerygma Bible Study on Handel's *Messiah* (and then attending the concert);
- A series on A Bird's Eye View of the Old Testament;
- A series on A Bird's Eye View of the New Testament;
- Stump the Minister(s) Question Box;
- Bible questions each week in the Sunday bulletin (with the answer the following week);
- Printing out the minister's sermons;
- Mail out Bible Study to every home;
- Faith Boxes distributed to every home (that include prayers, poems, graces, questions for family discussion);
- Topical lecture and discussion hour;
- Weekly Bible verse with explanation (in the Sunday bulletin);

- [redacted]ting a quilt or banner;
- Catechism study series;
- Study on "The Story of the Bible" (Wood Lake Books)

These programs were promoted in various ways including posters, surveys, articles in church newsletters, brochures, letters to the congregation and announcements from the pulpit and in church bulletins.

During this past year the selected congregations implemented these program ideas. After a wrap-up meeting of sharing and evaluating their experiences, the volunteers proposed ways to share their collective information:
(1) An article in the *Presbyterian Record* about this project;
(2) An article in the *Glad Tidings* and The *Presbyterian Message* about this project;
(3) Articles in Equip (in PCPak);
(4) A Booklet of Ideas on the Bible Project;
(5) An Elder's Resource;
(6) A "Do It Yourself" Workshop;
(7) A video about the role of the Bible in our lives;
(8) Link the Daily Devotional page on the Web.

If you want more information on the Adult Bible Project, contact Dorothy Henderson, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, ON M3C 1J7.

(W.M.S. members: Please note that many of these ideas could be used in mission programs.)

Where did this happen?

Congregations that participated in this pilot project covered various parts of Canada: **The Kirk of St. James, Charlottetown** linked up with **St. Columba**, a small rural church under the leadership of Rev. Michael Caveney. **Westminster Presbyterian Church, Ottawa** linked up with **Trinity Presbyterian Church, Kanata**, under the leadership of Blair Bertrand. **St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Calgary,** linked up with **Valleyview Presbyterian Church** (a smaller congregation in a new facility) under the leadership of Rev. Marion Barclay. **St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Saskatoon** worked in cooperation with **Saskatoon Native Circle Ministry** under the leadership of Merle McGowan and Bernice Shih.

In all these cases there was a mixture of a larger established congregation and a smaller, sometimes rural or ethnic congregation, to give an overview of the variety within The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

How do adults learn?

There are seven intelligences that make up learning patterns. These apply to adults as well as children and youth.

(1) **Verbal/Linguistic**: these people prefer to learn best through reading, discussion and writing.
(2) **Logical/Mathematical or Abstract thinking**: these people learn best by figuring out solutions to problems.
(3) **Visual/Spacial**: these people learn best through colours, pictures, maps.
(4) **Body/Kinesthetic:** these people learn best through movement, touching, doing.
(5) **Musical/Rhythmic:** these people learn best through involving music and rhythmic singing.
(6) **Interpersonal:** these people learn best in groups in shared or cooperative projects.
(7) **Intrapersonal**: these people learn best on their own, in reflection or through journalling.

Beyond Band-Aids and Benediction

Through Joe Reed, Area Missionary to the Caribbean and Central America, The Presbyterian Church has Been a Very Real Presence in Tragic Times

At the meeting of Regional staff held in March, 1999 in San Salvador, my colleagues asked me to assemble a narrative history of the work of The Presbyterian Church in Canada in Central America and the Caribbean. To be honest, I have resisted the assignment, and for a number of reasons. My own memory has clouded. Documentation is fragmentary and scattered. Most of all, I loath the use of the first person singular and I fear that it will pepper the following account, much more than any of us would want.

Last week, however, a half dozen of us sat at table at the home of Kennis and Ken Kim in Guatemala. Sister Anselma, a 70-year-old nun of the Little Sisters of St. Clare, began to tell stories. Specifically of the march here in San Salvador in which the National Guard gunned down their very first catechist.

A story like many that, tragically, would follow: side streets blocked by tanks so marchers found no escape when other tanks approached them and gunners planted atop the Prensa Grafica building opened fire. The Guard was still there the next day so those bodies had no proper burial. Terrified at the sight of guns still poised atop the buildings, the people hauled 21 bodies into the church downtown. Hastily, they prised up flooring. Twenty-one candles burned there for years in their memory.

Now the candles have been extinguished; the bodies, moved. And the story, most tragically of all, is being lost. Ashes of the memory kick around yet. Every Sunday several hundred people gather in the basement of the new Cathedral to celebrate mass next to the tomb of the fallen Archbishop Romero. Upstairs, many more celebrate a traditional mass in the recently opened new Cathedral.

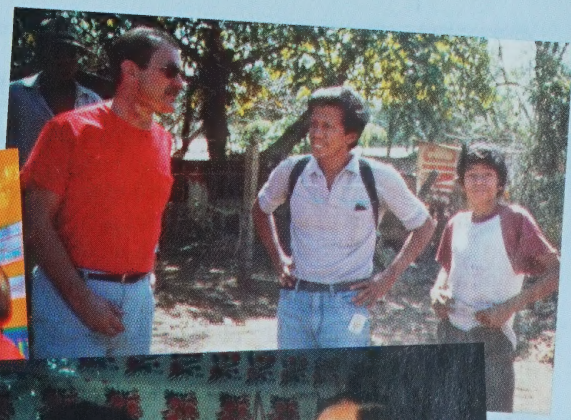
Anselma lives this passionate life. She was the first of her order in the Region and has seen their work grow to where Guatemalan and Salvadoran sisters abound. As her colleague and friend, Sister Ana says, "I think we make it too easy for the new novitiates. They have to test their calling for only a year or two. We need to make it a bit more difficult to get in."

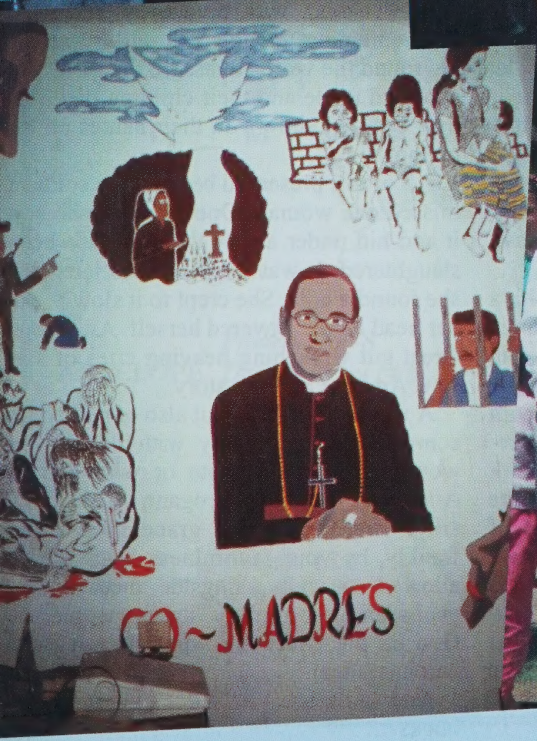
In short: a story to tell. And I could only echo others around that table in urging Anselma to write it all down. The war years in a battle zone where half the parish was under government control and the other half under that of the guerillas. (Salvadorans used to boast, in jest, that it was generally agreed that they had the two best equipped and best-trained armies in the Region!)

Her stories of 17 years in a cloister and then decades here: learning about popular education; engaging in prisoner exchange; smuggling the host across the government line lest the soldiers correctly conclude that, with the *hostia*, a priest must be present.

My guess is that Anselma will not write her story. She is a "people person" and her own will, tempered though it has been by decades of faithful discipline, still calls her to be with those who need her. This week a drunken man raped his four-year-old daughter. The grandmother, in tears, asks

Remembering What Can Never be Forgotten





for help. Giving her rice and corn and beans is, according to all the rules of development, a Band-Aid. But that is where Anselma needs to be this week and not in her study reflecting and remembering.

Three images of the importance of memory. All from El Salvador, where I am sitting at the moment. A country of which the recent history literally "breaks your heart".

Visiting a community of resettled guerrilla " in memory of a leading FMLN diplomat later fallen. (A personal aside: I well remember a flight from Managua to San Salvador in 1990 or 1991. The peace accords recently signed. Over the plane's speakers, a message: "Will passenger Ungo please identify himself to a member of the flight crew?" Identify himself? That had been a death sentence a year before, yet there he was, claiming his duty free purchases.)

I am walking through the community with the PWSD partner, IMU. At my side, a child of maybe 10 or 12. "And what is this place called?" "Guillermo Ungo City" she responds. "And why is that? Who was he?," I ask. "I do not know. A man. I think Salvadoran. Dead now." We, who remember all this have failed her. Worse, we have failed the story.

Working on, some pastoral issues with a Salvadoran friend. A wealthy businessman and a fundamentalist Christian. But with tremendous pain locked inside. When he heard that I had joyfully participated with the current mayor and other church representatives in cutting a ribbon on a tiny park - tiny: it's an island in the traffic of the "Alameda Roosevelt" - in honour of Monsenor Romero, he said, "I wasn't here during the war so I can't comment. But I understand that he was a guerrilla sympathizer." It's been two decades since thugs gunned the man down as he pronounced the words over the bread, "This is my body, broken for you...."

And finally, El Mozote. A tiny community nestled against the Honduran border. A place of unspeakable tragedy.

Soldiers of the Atacatl Elite brigade swept into town. They killed everyone, tossing infants in the air and catching them on their bayonets. Human beings did things that day to brothers and sisters that can never be forgotten. Forgiven, perhaps. But seared into our collective memories.

A walk with a Salvadoran friend. Again, a child next to us. "And what happened here? Do you know?" The child hesitates. "No, they say there was a battle. But I don't really know. And there are some crosses...."

My friend is Salvadoran, but her Dad was North American, a missionary. Mary's mom was a Salvadoran native. And so she, Mary, is a wonderful ethnic mix. I am so Euro-Canadian with blue eyes, and what hair remaining, blonde. But, at last: at last we found the words to assure the girl. "My aunt and uncle and their children died that day. Come. I show you their names on the memorial...."

All of this preserved because the soldiers missed one woman. One woman who saw it and hid under a cow that had also been slaughtered. It was twelve hours later that she found a hole. She crept to it slowly, put her head inside, covered herself. And wept. Great gut wrenching heaving cries of sorrow. And she told the story.

A note of humility. But also of reality. To compare my own story with that of the woman from El Mozote or with that of Anselma would be arrogant, misleading, silly. But, by God's grace and, quite frankly, by your faithfulness, I have been allowed to walk alongside these courageous and enormously strong people. To God be the Glory for what He has done amongst them.

Ana, Anselma, let's get out our notebooks....

Creatures of the Bible

by Jim Phillips

A	U	N	I	C	O	R	N
G	N	D	E	S	U	O	M
A	N	T	C	F	I	R	H
M	U	L	E	P	E	E	L
R	H	P	R	L	G	D	E
O	A	O	T	J	O	I	S
W	C	T	R	A	D	P	A
S	A	E	T	S	B	S	E
C	E	C	A	M	E	L	W
D	M	W	N	C	A	L	F
T	A	O	G	I	A	U	B
E	R	C	L	A	M	B	K

ANT	*Proverbs 6:6-8*	GOAT	*Genesis 27:9*
ANTELOPE	*Deuteronomy 14:5*	HORSE	*Genesis 47:17*
APE	*I Kings 10:22*	LAMB	*Leviticus 3:7*
BAT	*Leviticus 11:13*	MOUSE	*I Samuel 6:5*
BULL	*Job 21:10*	MULE	*I Kings 18:5*
CALF	*Exodus 32:4*	RAM	*Ezekiel 34:17*
CAMEL	*I Samuel 27:9*	SCORPION	*Revelation 9:5*
CATTLE	*Genesis 13:2*	SPIDER	*Job 8:14*
COW	*Genesis 41:2*	UNICORN (RHINOCEROS)	*Isaiah 34:7*
DEER	*Deuteronomy 14:5*	WEASEL	*Leviticus 11:29*
DOG	*Psalm 59:6*	WORM	*Exodus 16:20*
GNAT	*Matthew 23:24*		

New Life - A Place of Light and Hope

by Joanne Instance

- Joanne Instance of Winnipeg has for many years been active in the Women's Missionary Society at all levels, and on the Women's Inter-Church Council.

Eyes old beyond their years: my first impression of the girls that live at the New Life Centre in Chiang Mai, Thailand. I was privileged to attend the Asian Christian Women's Conference in Thailand in November 1998. As the Conference unfolded, representatives from each of the 17 Asian countries talked about trafficking and child prostitution - a major problem in their countries.

The United Nations estimated that four million girls and women are already trafficked around the world annually and that Thailand's $33 billion tourist trade for example is built on a foundation of sex tourism. The United States and Canada are part of the market.

One of the field trips of the Conference included visiting the New Life Centre - a service project of the Christian Service Foundation (Baptist). Increasing numbers of people, and the tightening restrictions on the use of land, mean that the hill tribe people in Thailand are not able to maintain their traditionally self-reliant, agrarian lifestyle.

More and more people are forced to go into the city to work and many hill tribe girls and women are ending up in the country's many brothels, massage parlours and nightclubs. Prostitute buyers also actively recruit hill tribe girls, often buying them from their families or the village headmen.

More than 100 girls and young women at a time, ranging in age from 11 to 30 years old are now sheltered in the houses of the Centre located in Chiang Mai. More than 60% of the young women at the Centre fall into the category of "at risk" cases - risk of being tricked or sold into prostitution.

There is room also for crisis cases - young women who have come from brothels or other abusive situations, and need medical care and counseling to help them make decisions about their future. All the residents will attend Thai government adult

education classes at night, and during the day are given the opportunity to learn handicraft skills - embroidery and other traditional arts. They are tutored in math, Thai, English and literacy in their own tribal languages at the centre and those who achieve 5th grade level literacy in the Thai language are able to go to governmental vocational schools during the day and prepare for a wide range of occupations.

The objectives of the Centre: to provide shelter to young tribal women and provide an opportunity for those who have been exploited in any way to realize their potential as people of dignity and worth.

There is no discrimination against women who choose to follow religions other than Christianity, but a full time Chaplain presents the Christian message to residents by organizing devotional time at the Centre and conducting Bible Studies.

When I arrived home, I did some research into the situation in Canada. I discovered a newsletter from ECPAT - Canada, "End Child Prostitution and Trafficking" a branch of a Global Network to End Child Prostitution.

In that I read about "Out of the Shadows - the International Youth Summit on Sexually Exploited Youth" which was held in Victoria, BC in March 1998. A conference entitled "GIRLS! Stories worth telling" held in Toronto in March 1998, formulated an action statement and presented it to Senator Landon Pearson.

The statement directed at governments, non-governmental organizations, media representatives and institutions at all levels, as well as to the public, urges everyone to work together and take immediate action on the priority issue of gender discrimination and human rights, education and health, violence and exploitative labour.

The statement takes off from the principles and provisions enshrined in various international instruments including the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Platform of Action from the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing 1996. There is much work being done, and much more that has to be done to combat prostitution, AIDS and the use of drugs amongst homeless children - not only in Asia, but in Canada as well.

Broken Water Heater

What a lesson...
sans hot water
like a third world country learning
to suffer
just a little
to remind me
of someone else's suffering
and of the luxury of hot, hot,
at the ready, water.

Now it's fixed
(Amen) but
things do break down
maintenance is
needed in things,
in relationships,
comfort is fragile
suffering lies
in wait.

When I get
immersed in struggles
losing focus,
I find myself
in hot water.

What a lesson...
to remind
me of You
the water walker
calming the sea tempest.

Joan Bond

This is part of a report of one of the KCCJ participants in the Native Ministries Consultation in April.

MY SELF, MY PEOPLE, OUR LOCATION
by Keun Kim

I am Keun Kim, a Korean who was born, raised and educated in Japan. I am the father of two boys and a girl. Our family is part of the third and fourth generations of Korean residents in Japan.

Our people, the Koreans in Japan, number over 600,000. Like our family, most Koreans in Japan are the children left from the hundred years of modern history between Japan and Korea, with many historical issues still unresolved, unreconciled and unhealed.

In such a context, I came to the Christian faith in my teen years. I felt a calling to spread the light of the gospel among our people in Japan. After working my way through the studies and training required, I was ordained as a minister of the gospel in the Korean Christian Church in Japan (KCCJ). Following ministries in Sapporo and Osaka, I came to serve in the KCCJ Shimonoseki Church in 1993. During my 13 years of pastoral work, I have often felt the need for refreshment and further education for ministry.

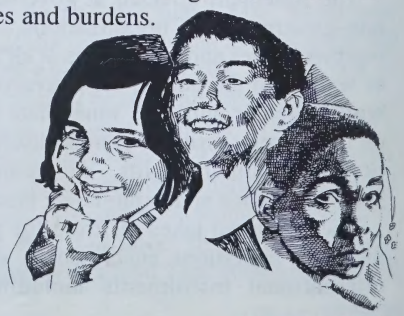
This past April, I was given the opportunity to visit North America for the first time. The KCCJ chose four representatives to attend the Native Ministries Consultation in Winnipeg, April 28-30, sponsored by the Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC). With other representatives of PCC mission partners in North-East Asia, we learned a lot of things through a week of field trips in Vancouver, Saskatchewan and Winnipeg before the consultation.

Through the encounters and exchanges with some of Canada's native peoples and experiencing some of the ministry among them, we were deeply moved. From what we saw and heard of their life situations, we found many of their vital issues common to those among our own people and other minorities in Japan. It was a memorable, challenging experience for me personally.

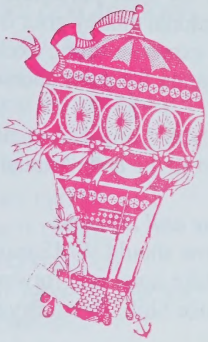
There seem to be many examples of common issues faced in ministry among Koreans in Japan and the first nation peoples in Canada:

- human lives and homes broken by substance abuse and dependency.
- high rates of anti-social violence and self-injury, even suicide.
- racial prejudice and systemic discrimination denying means of life support.
- insecurity of unsettled family nurture and daily living.
· personal and social crises in identity formation.
- the twisting of personal character formation under socio-psychological duress.

From the short period of observation and exchange in Canada, we gained many deeper insights into ourselves and our people in Japan. Our grasp of the potential of the gospel to liberate and empower people in the face of the above "minuses" was increased. The question left is how the ministries of the Christian church are to apply and actualize the gospel message in the contexts of minority peoples, the few and the least of our neighbours with their injuries and burdens.



go to each local group in January, 2000. The PCC bulletin for that date features ***Mission Awareness Sunday***. The Atlantic Mission Society is sharing the ideas but doing their own mailings.



Pause and discuss:
1. Name the ways that you can promote the work of WMS in your congregation and/or your presbytery.
2. Design action plans - naming the person(s) in charge.

Education

In order to reach those frontiers, we need to be organized and informed. It is our goal to "increase our knowledge so that we can share it" in the areas of leadership skills and spiritual growth. Job descriptions are available for local group, presbyterial and synodical officers[1]. Currently they describe the traditional roles of officers and will likely be updated in the next three years. I encourage you to develop your own job descriptions for the new positions that have been created.

Pause and Discuss:
1. Name the ways that you have received leadership skills.
2. Which ways have been the most helpful and why?
3. Name the skills you need to develop and explore the ways that these may happen. (Contact your Regional Staff person or myself if you need further help in this area.)

We also need to be strong in our faith to be able to share it. In this vein we are getting requests for resources for spiritual growth. Being more spiritual comes from making time to reflect on our faith - quiet time, in retreat, in study of scripture, in prayer. Currently, national staff are planning to prepare a resource for meetings, private devotions and/or retreats that will include an extensive bibliography.

Pause and Discuss:
1. Talk about how you understand spirituality.
2. Name the ways that your group could grow spiritually.
3. Name the resources that you would need to accomplish this.
4. Plan for spiritual growth, ie, conference, retreat, special worship.

Finance

Again and again, people want to know where our money goes. Does it go to the frontiers of mission? Currently the WMS Constitution and By-Laws state that all money collected for mission of the Women's Missionary Society shall be forwarded to the General Fund in Toronto. The Council then budgets and uses the funds in a variety of ways for the mission of the greater church.

For example, WMS gives $150,000 to the Life and Mission of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, as well as about $390,000 towards the salaries of Regional Staff (7/12th of the total

cost.) WMS also grants $10,000 from Literature funds to organizations, educational [redacted] tions for their purchasse of text books, periodicals and other educational/reading supplies. Additional money goes from designated Endowment Funds (about $296,000 in 1999) for mis sion exposure tours, exchange visits, publication of mission materials, conference grants, education for international partners and more.

Our 84th Annual Council meeting voted to set up a Task Force to review the finances and to report to the 86th Annual Council meeting (2001).

Pause and Discuss:
1. How should WMS money be directed?
2. Make notes and forward to any member on the Task Force (Betty McLagan, Giollo Kelly, Bernice Shih, Druse Bryan, Joanne Instance, Mary Moorhead-ex-officio)

In Addition

Out of discussions on looking ahead, the 84th Annual Council meeting also voted to set up a ***Task Force to Revise the Constitution and By-Laws.*** These people are Lynda Reid, Joan Sampson, Marg Befus, Jean Dancey, Carol Mackowski, Mary Moorhead - ex-officio.

What's Ahead?

The future of the society depends on all its members. If we are taking mission to new heights in the new millennium, how can we do this? Look for the frontiers of mission. They may be local, national or international. What can we do about poverty and violent acts against women and children in our society and beyond?

I believe that as women, we need to continue to speak out for and with other women who suffer oppression and injustices. Let us find that role together as we take mission to new heights.

[1] **Local Group Executive Pack available from The Book Room ($2.75 +GST) and Guidelines for Officers of Presbyterials/Sunodicals goes out in August mailing from Executive Secretary.**

Did You Know? that the **Christian Literature Fund** of the Women's Missionary Society responds to requests for financial assistance in providing books and other forms of literature to organizations in Canada and many parts of the world. Our budget is $10,000. Here are two examples of those who have received our assistance:

Saskatchewan: Bibles for the Saskatoon Native Ministry - an outreach ministry for Native adults, youth and children.

Cuba: Christian education materials in Spanish for children and youth. (Catholic materials are available in Spanish but most Protestant books are in English.)

Seniors on the Go

Living out of Cans, Boxes and Bags

by Norma Tomlinson

Really Good Scalloped Potatoes

Peel and slice 4 or 5 potatoes.
Boil for 5 minutes in salted water.
Drain.
Add 1 chopped medium onion.
Pour into a casserole dish.
Add 1 can Cream of Mushroom soup.
Mix gently.
(For more sauce, add 1/2 cup milk.)
Sprinkle on black pepper and dot with butter.
Bake at 350 for 1/2 hour or so.

Recipes

There are recipes for pork and lamb,
Chicken, scallops, luscious ham,
Gourmet recipes so rare.
On printed page you will find there
Chinese food exotic too,
And lobster, such a lovely hue,
Italian spaghetti, quite a dish.
And of course all kinds of fish.
There is chili, bubbling in a pot,
Stew and dumplings served quite hot,
English pikelets, golden tea,
Scottish scones, a delight to see.
Delicious Slovak cabbage rolls,
Filet mignon, broiled on coals,
Danish kringle, fit for a lord,
And Sweden's famous smorgasbord.

Of all the recipes I have tried
The one I truly serve with pride
Is left-overs, made mysteriously...
The secret stays alone with me!

Gladys Nolan

"*I*"-Witness

She was only a tiny tot, not quite three. Her curls bounced up and down as she went running, skipping and jumping down the street in an aura of carefree joyful delight. As I looked she seemed to be alone, but I was relieved to see her parents following at a safe distance, watching her.

The child turned to see if her parents were coming, then assured they were, happily resumed her play. Her parents were proudly enjoying her antics knowing she was safe under their protection. I am sure they would instantly respond if she fell and hurt herself. I could imagine the tender care and comfort that would be hers.

Is there a lesson here for us? Believers are called 'children of God' in the Scriptures. Under God's watchful care, our parent, God allows us to live each day with the freedom of choice. God rejoices with us when we are happy and enjoying life. When we get hurt by our wrong choices or the choices of others, God is only as far away as our prayers. God hears, will answer, meet our need, comfort us and make it all work together for good in God's own time and way.

The love of human parents is but a dim reflection of the great Divine Love God has for His children. In the knowledge of that Love, we should live as joyfully and as carefree as the little girl, assured that our heavenly Parent is always there for us.

E. Jean Abrams,
Cobourg, ON

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Quiet Moments with Hildegard and the Women Mystics. 120 daily readings edited by Evelyn Bruce. Servant Publications hardcover, dustjacket, $26.25 GG4787

The women in this volume have one basic commonality: they were in love with the Trinitarian God, whom they knew in extraordinarily intimate ways. God talked to them. God walked with them. God told them they were His own. Not that this was an easy road. Many reveled in spiritual ecstasies, but suffered intense physical pain and emotional anguish. Fortunately, these women were able to write what they'd seen, dictate what they'd heard, and teach what they'd learned, so we can learn of and from them.

Why Not Become the Fire? Encounters with Women Mystics. Evelyn Mattern and Helen David Brancato, illustrator Ave Maria Press GG4788 $24.75

What is a mystic? A mystic is one who has a direct experience of God and engages in a process of growing into and exploring it. Such a direct experience may be unusual, but it is not something to be feared or avoided. The Psalmist in fact, prays to see God face-to-face. Mystics, we might say, see God with the eyes of love. Far from being "crazy", mystics share an experience that engages heart, faith, and rational mind. This book provides background on a number of women mystics as well as offers samples of the writing each is particularly noted for.

A Retreat with Job and Julian of Norwich: Trusting That All Will Be Well. Carol Luebering. St. Anthony Messenger Press, GG4428 $15.95

Whether for use at a retreat, or a one day workshop or even for a sermon series, your directors for the event are the biblical sufferer Job and the medieval mystic Julian of Norwich. Complaining Job and serene Julian have something important in common: an abiding trust in God's willingness to hear human cries.

A series of scripted conversations makes this resource easy to adapt for use in many circumstances. Questions for group discussion could be easily lifted from the text.

Dear People:
On Monday July 26th I received my July/August '99 issue, and I must say that I found the cover the ugliest cover you have ever used.

When I grew up the description of HOT STUFF was not at all complimentary, rather "promiscuous" as it was applied to people, so I find the use of that phrase rather "unfortunate".

Just had to let you know my reaction.

In Margaret Vanderzweerde's letter, it was a pleasure to note mention of "Beatrice Scott Scholarship Fund" instituted by our group, the Beatrice Scott Evening Auxiliary WMS.

Dorothy Lamont, Port Elgin, ON

Editor's Note: I must agree that the cover did not reproduce quite as we had hoped. It was a photo of "cloth" flames on the wall at Council '99. As Margaret Robertson commented, "you probably had to be there to appreciate it."

August 14, 1999
Women's Missionary Society:
I am writing in response to your request in the Nov/Dec '98 Glad Tidings re the "Who & Where" listing. I find the names and addresses of the staff helpful prior to Christmas. I am glad to secure the addresses - some have changed from the year before - of those I contact only at Christmas time.

For a number of years, the Sunday School children of St. Andrew's in Watford became St. Andrew's World Travelers during the summer months when they learned about the mission work being done by the Presbyterian Church in Canada. The listing became helpful in securing the names of the personnel we were meeting and their addresses, especially the year we wrote to them.

For a few summers, it has not been possible for St. Andrew's World Travelers to meet. The children kept asking about it. So this year, 1999, the WMS has set up a display of one mission area monthly, for not only the children but also the adults to look at. An article on that mission work is put in the Church bulletin and a story and accompanying handwork is on the display table for each family with children to take, and they do.

The WMS is already considering the mission fields for use on the display table for next year. The listing of "Who & Where" is being used to plan the places to be visited monthly, the name(s) of the persons involved and their addresses. We are writing to them hoping they will have the time to reply. In 2000, we plan to share the replies with the children and the adults at St. Andrew's, Watford.

The "Who & Where" listing is not used by me a lot, but I am glad to have it available to refer to during the year.

I do thank you for making it available for so many years and would appreciate it if you are able to continue.

Yours sincerely,
Catherine Watson, Watford, ON

P. S. Are the persons: Rev., Dr., Mr., Mrs., Miss?

Note: Not using any titles or honorifics is a way to simplify the mailing list which is already cumbersome. It is also acceptable today to address some mail simply using the person's first and last name with no title.

June Stevenson:
I would like to commend you and your

staff for the change in our Glad Tidings.

The many poems and thoughts can be used in meeting planning. The mission update is great and is used in some of our meetings.

Previously I was complaining a bit for I was looking for new poems and thoughts and they weren't available in the issue.

The change is great and I am happy to use the Glad Tidings and encourage othersto subscribe.

Ella McWilliam, Dutton ON

Editor:

Awhile ago there was a letter to the editor in our local weekend paper that I found quite disturbing.

It was from a distraught young mother. She had gone shopping at one of our local drug stores with her two small children. It seems she had had a hard time completing her business because it was Seniors Day. She was slowed because of elderly people "milling around", drinking coffee". She couldn't see why there should be a Seniors Day at the expense of young families who are contributing to the economy.

I couldn't get her letter out of my mind so I wrote this reply:

Life is a Revolving Door

Life is a revolving door. We all start out as babies, young children, teenagers. We fall in love, marry, and have children.

Few of us live charmed lives. We go through illness, accidents, loss of loved ones, and sometimes violence. For some there are layoffs, or closures, or getting fired. Some of us live our lives being abused in various ways.

We all struggle, do our best, and have our successes and failures. All too soon, the children are grown and gone, busy with their new families.

Now is the easy time of life - ri

Some of us have constant aches and pains. Some of us are alone, some of us wish we were. Where have the years gone? Why don't the kids call? Don't they know how much we miss them?

Never mind, it's Seniors Day. Might as well go. There might be a friendly face, a smile, perhaps a little conversation. If there is a snack, that's nice, if it can be shared.

You know what the biggest shock in life is? It's when the elderly person walking too slow, or standing in the way, or fumbling with money at the cash register is you!

Ah, but life is just a revolving door. Look at your children, feel your love for them. We feel the same about you.

When was the last time you put your arm around a parent or grandparent and said, "I love you." for no reason at all?

So take your lumps and pay your dues. If you are real lucky, one day you'll get to go to Seniors Day.

We won't be there, we'll have made way for you.

Life is just a revolving door.

Marlene Lane, Pentiction, BC

Lastly, Dorothy Crocker of Milton, ON writes to say that Glad Tidings "has greatly improved. My granddaughter who is only ten, loves the poetry and my grandson who is younger likes the art work. So it touches every age. Would you dare to print controversial subjects or would it upset too many of your regular readers?

You are part of Glad Tidings magazine. I can't imagine it without your comments.

Editor: We have printed controversial material in the past. And, yes, some readers haver been offended; some have cancelled their subscriptions. We try to present a wide variety of material to stimulate and educate readers.

MISSION IN ACTION

Heather Jones
Malawi

Fall 1999 - Last time I wrote, I talked about Saturday's six-hour 'wedding' service. Today I will tell you about Sunday's three-hour long service. It was a weekend full of worship!

I was invited to Chibavi (pronounced Chi-wav-ee) CCAP church to witness the commissioning of the First Mzuzu Girl's Brigade. Chibavi is one of the 'suburbs' of Mzuzu. It is a densely populated area located 10 minutes by car from the Synod compound where I live. I had been to visit this group at one of their Sunday afternoon meetings, and so was glad to share this special service with them.

The Malawi Commissioner for Girls' Brigade, Mrs. Ruth Follayan, had been in Mzuzu for the week before, doing leadership training with the women who are volunteering with this group. It is one sign of the tremendous commitment of people here that my colleague from the Synod Education Department took her vacation leave to attend this course. Other congregations in Mzuzu were also invited to send representatives to this course, in hopes that more Brigades might be established.

There is not much in the way of organized activities for young people here in Malawi. The sports teams, extracurricular school activities, and music lessons that occupy the time of most Canadian children and youth are non-existent here in Mzuzu. Girls' Brigade fills an important social need and is a tremendous encouragement to the young women in this community.

Girls' and Boys' Brigades were strong in Malawi in the 1950s and '60s, but were banned by the former Life President H.K. Banda, in favour of his secular "Malawi Young Pioneers". The Young Pioneers became a group dedicated to enforcing total loyalty and obedience to the dictator. Clearly this was not a substitute for the Brigades.

On Sunday, in celebration of the special service, there were visiting choirs leading the ministry of music. The minister of Chibavi congregation also serves as the Synod's music co-ordinator and leader of the Mzuzu joint choir. This choir, and a youth choir from Nkhata Bay (one hour from Mzuzu) joined the regular Chibavi singing groups. Service began at 10:00 a.m. The girls in the Brigade paraded in, marching and singing. The first 30 minutes was a wonderful time of praise in song and dance.

With terrific ceremony, Mrs. Follayan commissioned Rev. Mhango chaplain to the Brigade. In explaining Rev. Mhango's role, she spoke of the commitment of the Girls' Brigade organization to operate under the clear authority of the congregation. Rev. Mhango, in turn, commissioned the captain, Mrs. Elsey Nkowane, and her six lieutenants. The congregation pledged to support these women through prayer and co-operation with the plans and activities of the Brigade.

Then it was time for the girls themselves to be officially inducted in the

Brigade. Some 50 girls, from ages six to 18, were called by name to the front of the church. They repeated, in chorus, the aims and motto of the Girls' Brigade: Seek, Serve, and Follow Christ. The commissioner presented them with Girls' Brigade membership cards.

After everyone was commissioned, the girls led the worship service by offering interpretations of passages of scripture. I was particularly impressed with the drama in which the girls were encouraged to "Rise up and take (their) place in leadership of the church", remembering the various Biblical women who have played important roles in the story of faith. To cheers throughout the congregation, the girls were reminded that it was women who first learned of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and it was they who were first commissioned to "Go and Tell".

After the girls' program, visitors to the service were asked to speak a few words. I told the congregation that Girls' Brigade is truly an international fellowship, and that Canadians who are, or have been, involved in Girls' Brigade would be pleased to hear of their pioneering group in Mzuzu. The Clerk of Session told the girls and the congregation that he looks forward to using the girls in the congregation's evangelistic campaign. He said it was obvious that the girls are committed to the goal of reaching out into the community with the Good News, and they are clearly capable of interpreting the core of the message.

It is not easy to put on a program like Girls' Brigade in a place where poverty is so pervasive. Most of the girls could not afford the uniforms that make the members of the Brigade feel special. Without the assistance of the congregational minister, few would have had their blue skirts in time for this service. Rev. Mhango knows that he will not recover most of the 'loans' he made for these uniforms, but he felt that they were important enough for him to invest in. Similarly, resources for the program will always be difficult to obtain.

Through God's grace and the hard work of the leaders, the Brigade will soldier on. Even without materials we would consider basic to running a group in Canada, these girls will learn knowledge and self-confidence, and will grow in their commitment to Christ. This is truly Good News!

Heather

The Inglis Family
Blantyre, Malawi

September, 1999 - We wanted to update you on our work in Malawi. Glenn was called to the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Blantyre Synod, to head up the Church and Society program. The CCAP is the largest Protestant Church in Malawi and historically has been active in the social and political affairs of the nation. In 1992 the Roman Catholic Bishops issued their Lenten Letter which severely criticized the authoritarian Banda regime. It was a dangerous moment for the Church with some powerful people calling for the Bishops to be executed.

International pressure, however, influenced Banda to seek the will of the people and in a 1993 referendum there was an overwhelming decision to proceed to multi-party elections the following year. This election was won by the United Democratic Party under president Muluzi who was subsequently re-elected in June of this year.

the midst of all this change and confusion the CCAP wanted to speak to its members as well as bring the light of the Gospel to bear on the public life of the nation. Through the Church and Society Committee there was an initial effort to create the Public Affairs Committee (PAC) that brought all major faith communities together, including Moslems, to lobby for a just and peaceful transition to democracy.

C & S also lobbied for a strong Bill of Rights in the new Constitution as well as cooperating with emerging non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to consolidate democratic gains. (Much of this early work was carried out by Edgar Hielema, a Canadian lawyer who volunteered two years with the PCC in this exciting period.)

When Glenn arrived in 1997 it seemed that while the major battle had been won, there was now an urgent need to deepen the public's understanding of the democratic process and human rights as well as the responsibilities of citizenship.

Thus, an ambitious program of civic education was initiated which targeted community and church leaders who would then share information with their fellow citizens. The work and skills of many organizations was pooled to come up with useful training modules for people who were often illiterate and had little understanding of democracy. In addition, we worked hard to place the movement for a just and democratic nation within the Biblical parameters of justice, peace and the integrity of creation. We recalled the reformed legacy that good citizenship is the fruit of the Christian life lived out in the world.

By the beginning of this year we switched our emphasis to voter education in preparation for the June elections. We reached over 200,000 voters through our programs and were publicly commended by a large international agency for initiating an excellent - and low-cost - voter education program.

This sort of work costs money. Our basic funding comes from the Church Committee on International Cooperation (ICCO) in The Netherlands. The specific voter education grants came from USAID. In addition, of course, our stipend is met by International Ministries. It should also be mentioned that Church and Society does not run independently. Our Program is part of the Projects Office of Blantyre Synod which has significant programs in Community Based Orphan Care, Development Through Literacy, Naming'azi Farm Training Centre and Development Education.

That brings us up to the present. The country is quite tense now, unfortunately, as we await the High Court ruling on the legitimacy of the June presidential elections. The opposition alliance has

OVERSEAS STAFF BIRTHDAYS

MARCH

12 - Ling Schwarz, Nepal
19 - Naomi Inglis, Malawi
27 - Margaret Vanderzweerde, India

APRIL

1 - Joel Lessard-Clouston, Japan
9 - Cathy McMullen, India
11 - Sean David Allison, Cameroon
15 - Sherien Barsoum, Cyprus
22 - Linda Inglis, Malawi

complained that the electoral process was biased and will not accept the Presidential results. While there were irregularities in the registration process, the elections themselves were judged free and fair. It is doubtful that the opposition has a case, but they have managed to stir dissent and there were some outbreaks of violence in the aftermath of the election results. Unfortunately, the voting patterns of Malawi were regionally based and so there are concerns about long-term national unity.

In response to this climate of uncertainty, we have decided that rather than going broader with civic education, we need to go deeper. We are currently submitting a proposal to donors to train our 13 Church and Society Presbytery Committees to identify the critical social, economic and human rights issues in their areas in order to be advocates for change. There will also be training in local government in preparation for local elections expected next year.

In addition to this work, Glenn is associate Minister at Michiru Church, an urban congregation of 3000 or so. The English service is at 6:00 a.m. and is still a shock to the system.

Linda keeps very busy with several projects. She co-runs a community-based program for the disabled in Ndirande, a poor suburb of Blantyre. On that note, she was thrilled to learn that the community of Badjeros, Glenn's home city in Ontario (north of Orangeville), raised over $1200 to assist in buying wheelchairs for members of the group. Linda also volunteers in the Community Based Orphan Care Centres by leading singing with energetic pre-schoolers. Somewhere in there she also pitches in up at Open Arms, a locally run orphanage for AIDS orphans where she is conducting child care classes for the caregivers.

Luke had a very successful outcome in his IGCSE (Cambridge 'O' level) exams. He will begin the two-year 'A' level program this month. Naomi will be in Form 3 and is also doing well in her studies. Jocelyn just finished a summer as lifeguard at Camp Douglas in BC and starts off on a trek through New Zealand, Australia and Zimbabwe before landing in Malawi early November. We look forward to her visit and so do the kids at Open Arms where she spends most of her time here. She will return to UBC a year from now.

We have had a lot of visitors this year. Dorcas and Noel Gordon spent time at Zomba Theological College and visited with us frequently. Elizabeth Forrester of Campbell River, BC was with us through April. In June we had a YIM team arrive and move on to Mangochi where they built a house with Habitat for Humanity. Caroline Anderson and Adriana Van Duyvendyk from St. Andrew's, Duncan, BC, stayed on for awhile and got to see our work a little more close at hand.

A big moment for us came in June when we moved into 'Canada House'. International Ministries decided that rather than spending money fixing very old houses that are in some cases beyond repair, it was better to build a new house which would have a guest house to be used for longer-term guests and volunteers from the PCC. We count ourselves blessed to be the first to enjoy this house and are striving to make it our home.

It has a very big living room that allows us to hold the potlucks and teas that are part of life here on the Blantyre Mission. There was a while when we wondered if missionaries were an endangered species. But in the past few weeks two families from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland have arrived and there is hope of other personnel in future. It is

NEWS

MISSION STUDY NEWS

CASTRO DISCOVERS REVOLUTIONARY BROTHERS

Havana, 14 October (ENI) - Jesus Christ was "a great social revolutionary", Cuba's Communist leader, Fidel Castro told an ecumenical delegation visiting the Cuban capital in October.

The delegation, which made a week-long visit to Cuba, was led by German Protestant theologian Konrad Raiser, general secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC), and included Carlos Emilio Ham, a Cuban Presbyterian who is one of the presidents of the Caribbean Conference of Churches. The delegation is the highest-ranking church group to travel to Cuba since Pope John Paul's visit early last year.

During the meeting, President Castro questioned the delegation about the life and thinking of Martin Luther. After being told how Luther challenged the Catholic Church of his time, Castro said that he often felt like Luther must have felt. Castro led a successful revolution which overthrew the dictatorial rule of Fulgencio Batista in January 1959.

President Castro, who as a child attended Catholic schools, added that he admired the manner in which Protestants prayed, describing it as a "very direct way of communicating with God".

Dr Raiser's visit to Cuba came at a key time in the life of the Caribbean country, which has faced a major economic crisis since the collapse of Communism in eastern Europe and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Cuba's main economic backer since the early 1960s, when the United States imposed an economic blockade. In recent years, Cuba has been promoting Western tourism as one of several ways of attracting foreign currency.

About half of Cuba's 11 million citizens are Roman Catholic, although only a small percentage attend church regularly. About three per cent of Cubans are Protestant - members of the Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Pentecostal and Nazarene churches. Many Cubans are adherents of Afro-Cuban religions such as Santeria.

While preaching in a Presbyterian church in Havana on 10 October, Dr Raiser said that the WCC had been "unequivocal" in its opposition to the US embargo against Cuba. But he added that the Biblical vision of justice "still motivates us to struggle against the structures which produce injustice and exclusion among us".

During the service, the chancellor of the Catholic Archdiocese of Havana, Ramon Suarez Polcari, said that relations between Protestants and Catholics in Cuba were generally improving, and that it was time for Protestants and Catholics "to explore new forms of social ministry together" in urban centres where delinquency, crime and drugs were starting to appear.

Speaking to reporters after the service, Dr Raiser said that he believed that Cuba had taken "significant steps in the direction of implementing religious liberty" and that he was encouraged by the "growing space" for religion in Cuba.

LAW ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM OVERSEAS

- Chris Herlinger, New York, 18 October (ENI) - The US State Department has singled out five countries that it says are violating religious freedom, but only one of the five - China - is likely to face any possibility of sanctions.

The five nations - China, Iran, Iraq, Myanmar and Sudan - are the first to be designated under the Religious Freedom Act, which was signed into law by President Clinton last

year and which demands sanctions against nations found to be engaging in "severe violations of religious freedom".

The US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, has yet to decide what sanctions should apply. The sanctions could range from a formal diplomatic rebuke to the suspension of economic assistance.

Sanctions could be imposed against China, but it is far from certain that any severe sanctions will be applied. The Clinton administration has in the past criticized Beijing's human rights record, but has put a priority on good diplomatic and economic relations with China.

The National Council of Churches (USA) is concerned about the implications of the United States acting as the "religious police" of the world, Hsu said, and the dangers that the law could pose for local Christian ecumenical partners, such as the China Christian Council, if sanctions were applied.

However, more conservative U.S. church bodies, such as the Southern Baptist Convention, have been more critical of the situation in China. Citing human rights violations and continuing persecution of Protestants and Roman Catholics, the Ethics andReligious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist has opposed normal trade relations between the US and China.

Also in the State Department report:

- Iran was criticized for action against those practising the Baha'i faith;
- Iraq was cited for a gross violation of human rights, including arrests and murder, against Shi'ite Muslims;
- Myanmar was cited for the execution of Buddhist monks;
- Sudan was accused of a formal campaign against animists and Christians who have resisted converting to Islam;
- The Taliban in Afghanistan were accused of continued human rights violations against those opposed to their hard-line rule;
- Serbia was cited for the killing, torture, rape and forced mass emigration of Kosovar Albanians, who are overwhelmingly Muslim.

CANADIAN DIOCESE FACING BANKRUPTCY

- Ferdy Baglo, Prince George, Canada, 5 October (ENI)-- A 5,000-member Anglican diocese in British Columbia may face bankruptcy if it is forced to pay major damages as a result of a series of court cases on sexual abuse.

In a judgement handed down on 30 August, Justice Janice Dillon of the Supreme Court of British Columbia ruled that the Diocese of Cariboo, the Anglican Church of Canada and the federal government were jointly liable for compensation in the case of Floyd Mowatt, who was sexually abused 30 years ago at a church residential school in British Columbia.

The amount of damages has not yet been made public, but the Anglican Journal, the church's national publication, estimated the church's portion of the award at about C$200,000. Although the Diocese of Cariboo has sufficient resources to pay its share of damages, there are four more actions pending related to the same offender.

Derek Clarke, a residence supervisor at St George's residential school in Lytton, was convicted in 1993 and jailed for sexually abusing the plaintiff and several other boys. The issue before Justice Dillon was to determine who the employer was and who should pay the damages. She found the church, which ran the institution and had hired Clarke, 60 per cent responsible and the government, under whose mandate the school was operated, 40 per cent responsible. She found they both breached their duty, but that the church, in a position of trust, had greater liability for failing to protect the children in their charge.

The diocese might be faced with bankruptcy,

Archbishop Crawley told ENI. "If the Diocese of Cariboo has no money, then I guess it can sell buildings, or refuse to sell. I suppose the courts could order it, but we simply don't know that." He added: "If the church buildings are seen as being held in trust for the purposes of worship, then a liquidator may not have access to them. If the diocese sells some buildings and pays some judgements, and then there are more judgements, we will eventually have to say we are bankrupt. We have no assets left."

This is the first decision involving residential schools and the Anglican Church. The church still faces more than 200 similar lawsuits involving hundreds of plaintiffs.

OLD CATHOLIC CHURCH ORDAINS FIRST WOMAN PRIEST

- Piet Halma, Utrecht, 22 September (ENI) - The Netherlands' first woman priest was ordained on September 18, 1999.

Grete Verhey-de Jager, a 47-year-old mother of four children, was ordained in the Old Catholic Church of Utrecht by Archbishop Antonius-Jan Glazemaker.

Verhey said soon after her ordination: "With women in office, I hope that there will be more integrity in the church, and also that ordinary churchgoers will relate more easily to the priest."

Verhey told journalists that the decision to seek ordination had not been taken on her own initiative. "The idea came from the people with whom I work daily." Before being ordained, Verhey worked for the church in two small villages, Oudewater and Schoonhoven and visited people in a local hospital.

The Old Catholic Church still has a special relationship with the Roman Catholic Church from which it broke away in the 18th century, and there is still partial recognition by the Vatican of the ordained clergy of the Old Catholic Church. However, Verhey said she expected the Vatican to declare her ordination invalid.

Interviewed by ENI, she agreed that her ordination could be a new obstacle to relations between her church and the Roman Catholic Church. But she added: "What is the aim of ecumenism? If you want to unite with the Roman Catholic Church, you may as well stop most ecumenical activities. If your aim is to learn from each other's traditions, to enrich each other and to work together on special occasions, then why would my ordination be an obstacle?"

Verhey, whose husband is the secretary-general of the Old Catholic Church in The Netherlands, has no ambitions to become a bishop. "My strength and my biggest interest at this moment are pastoral work," she said.

As recently as 1976 the International Bishops' Conference (IBC) - uniting the leaders of the world's Old Catholic churches - declared that the priesthood would not be opened to women. But in 1982 the IBC decided that women could become deacons, the first step on the way to priestly ordination. Then the Old Catholic Church in Germany ordained women priests, followed by the Old Catholic churches in Austria and Switzerland.

The Old Catholic Church in The Netherlands has 7500 members, 45 priests (28 of them in active service) and 27 parishes.

According to the Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, "the Old Catholic communion formally recognized Anglican ordinations in 1925, and entered into full communion with the Church of England in 1932."

MURDER MAY BE SOLVED

- Paul Jeffrey, Guatemala City, 31 August (ENI) - The mystery over the murder of Roman Catholic Bishop Juan Gerardi 16 months ago may soon be resolved, following the submission of evidence by a former Guatemalan

military intelligence official who has testified that his colleagues in the elite Presidential Guard were responsible for the death.

Government prosecutors have also received the results of the DNA analysis of blood found at the murder scene which reportedly provide important new evidence.

The two developments are offering renewed hope that, after more than a year of confusion, Guatemalans may be close to finding out who murdered the popular bishop.

Bishop Juan Gerardi was killed late on 26 April 1998, just two days after releasing a lengthy report blaming the country's military for most of the deaths and "disappearances" - abductions - during three decades of civil war.

A surprise witness came forward, Jorge Aguilar, an official of the Presidential Guard, the military squadron responsible for protecting the country's president. Bishop Gerardi's report had linked the Presidential Guard to cases of torture and murder.

On 26 August - two days after he gave his testimony - Aguilar, his wife and their five children were escorted by United Nations officials to the airport and left the country to live at an undisclosed location in Canada.

WOMEN BISHOPS COULD BE APPOINTED

- Moira O'Brien-Malone, Melbourne, 22 October (ENI) - The Anglican Church in Australia could be just five years away from voting to allow the appointment of its first woman bishop, according to supporters of women's ordination.

If it does so, Australia will become the fourth country in the world - after the United States, Canada and Aotearoa/New Zealand - to have Anglican women bishops. The appointment of women bishops is particularly significant because of their authority to ordain priests, prompting arguments about the validity of ordinations performed by women.

> "There are glass ceilings in all areas of life, the church just has stained glass ceilings."

According to Dr Muriel Porter, who is chairing a national working group examining the issue, the church hopes to introduce women bishops without any of the divisiveness of the debate that led up to the ordination of the nation's first Anglican women priests almost a decade ago. Dr Porter is a Melbourne-based academic and a lay member of the church's standing committee and general synod.

"It was terrible, just hideous," Dr Porter said of the arguments about women priests, which saw some in the church take court action to block the ordinations.

Dr Porter said that when the church began discussing the issue of women priests, it did not consider that they might one day want to be bishops. She believes all three ministries in the Anglican church - deacon, priest and bishop - should be open to women.

"There is also an issue among very hard-line people who say that even a bishop who has ordained women is tainted," Dr Porter told ENI. "So that Archbishop [Keith] Rayner, the Primate of the Australian church [who has ordained women], is not allowed to celebrate the Eucharist in Ballarat. It's a dreadful notion, just hideous, that they [bishops] have tainted hands because they've touched a woman, for heaven's sake. Just think about all the primitive taboos that are hanging underneath that sort of theology."

There are 11 women bishops in the world-wide Anglican communion - one in Aotearoa/New Zealand and 10 in the United States and Canada. Australia has 70 ordained women - about 50 priests and 20 deacons.

Asked by ENI if it was

disappointing, as the millennium closed, to still be fighting for equality for women, Dr Porter said: "Yes, at one level it is dismaying and frustrating....there are still many levels at which women do not have equality, not just in the church.

"There are glass ceilings in all areas of life, the church just has stained glass ceilings."

YMCA SAYS WOMEN MUST LEAD

- Edmund Doogue, Geneva, 3 November (ENI) - Jane Lee Wolfe, new president of the World Young Women's Christian Association (YMCA), which groups 25 million women in about 100 countries, wants to make peace the focus of this worldwide organization.

"Peace is the last great sacrifice, and the one we are unwilling to do," she told ENI in an interview on 1 November in Geneva. "It's the thing that Jesus talks about all the time. But we refuse to do it."

And Wolfe believes that women, especially those in the YWCA, must step in and do something fast, as those who run the world - men for the most part - have not been able to bring peace to the planet. "It's insulting to say men don't want peace," she tells ENI, referring to those women who blame the world's ills on men. "They do want peace, but they just can't bring it off. They've been trying for years."

Asked by ENI why the churches have not brought world peace, she looks bemused, even a little sad. "I don't know," Wolfe confesses, "especially given their scriptural basis. There is something in human nature which doesn't want to look peace in the face. It's the ultimate challenge."

Asked by ENI what were the advantages and the disadvantages resulting from the YWCA's status as an all-women organization, she could see only advantages: "The companionship and solidarity of women, especially if you are doing something challenging. You can't buy that solidarity, to know that women around the world are supporting you."

Wolfe chose an image which she described as "perhaps politically incorrect" to explain her vision of what women should do. "The image of the woman in the house has become painful. But if we look at it this way - the planet is our house. It's up to us [women] to see that the children in the house are cared for, are safe, don't fight each other, that the house itself is taken care of. My [a woman's] job is to keep the house safe. If I don't want the children in the house to have guns, I have to go into town and hold up placards outside the gun store.

"So you see, all we need to do with this image of the house is increase the size of the house! No doubt the image will wear out in time, but for now it works."

'FULL COMMUNION'

- Ferdy Baglo, Vancouver, 12 October (ENI) - Canada's 800,000 Anglicans and 200,000 Lutherans are enthusiastically embracing plans which will lead the two denominations into "full communion" in 2001.

At each denomination's national meetings delegates voted overwhelmingly to accept in principle the "Waterloo Declaration" which sets forth the goal of full communion in 2001.

According to a joint study document for the process, "full communion is understood as a relationship between two distinct churches to communions in which each maintains its own autonomy while recognizing the catholicity and apostolicity of the other, and believing the other to hold the essentials of the Christian faith."

IN THE SOCIETY

Presbyterial

Edmonton-Peace River Presbyterial held a Fall Meeting and a tea to welcome Joy Randall, missionary and nurse for 30 years in Taipei, Taiwan at Westmount Church, Edmonton, Alberta on October 1, 1999.

President, Norma Proudfoot, welcomed all. The meditation was given by Millie Freeman, that God reveals his presence in many ways as in the hymn. Scripture reading was from Ephesians 5.

Edna Murray introduced the guest speaker, Joy Randall, who explained her work, and described how conditions in the country have improved. Margaret Moar thanked Joy.

Laura Fuentes gave an interesting summary of the charitable work the WMS does in Edmonton called Operation Friendship.

The President closed the meeting with prayer. Tea and refreshments were served before the meeting.

The 85th Annual Meeting of **Calgary-MacLeod** Presbyterial was held February 26-27, 1999 at Varsity Acres, Calgary, Alberta. The Friday evening communion service was led by Rev. Jean Morris.

Saturday's events began with a worship and remembrance service. President Sandi Churchill welcomed all, followed by the business which included two mission updates, reports from the treasurer and secretaries, a book review as well as a sing-a-long.

After lunch, the group enjoyed a visit with Dr. Pauline Brown. The meeting concluded with the service of installation for officers..

Maitland Presbyterial held its Fall Rally on September 27. The theme was *Mission First Hand.* The evening began with a salad supper served by Kinlough WMS to 80 members and guests. The Bushell family and Joan Barr from Kinlough entertained.

Worship was led by Ripley, with scripture from Matthew 25:31-46, "Jesus' Vision of the Last Judgement". How does our nation fare and how do we respond?

The WMS of Brussels honoured Isabel Gibson with a Life Membership Certificate. Shirley McCall introduced Annette Vickers from Guelph, Director of PAN (Presbyterians Aiding Nicaraguans). PAN assists Nicaraguans with programs and materials.

Area staff Erin Crisfield introduced the 1999-2000 Mission Study.

Barrie Presbyterial Fall Rally was held at First Church, Collingwood on September 29, 1999. Jill Pardy of Oro Station conducted the meeting. An inspirational devotion was led by June Campbell and Kay Pearsall of Essa Road Church, Barrie. Elaine Steele of Sunnidale Corners reviewed books.

Members were divided into small groups for Bible Study and discussion on the topic, "Faithful Stewards".

Jill Pardy introduced guest speaker Gail Turner, Justice Ministries, who brought a powerful message urging everyone to respond to the call for global justice.

The meeting closed with a communion conducted by Rev. John Henderson, assisted by WMS members.

Barrie Presbyterial members were saddened by the passing of **Leona Harrison**, Presbyterial recording secretary. Leona was a devoted member of St. Andrew's, Oro Station.

WMS was her passion, and she gave leadership and encouragement to her group at Oro Station and also to the WMS group at Guthrie Church.

Leona is survived by her husband John, two sons and a daughter, their spouses and five grandchildren.

Rev. Carey Nieuwhof conducted a 'Celebration of Life' as a tribute to Leona at

St. Andrew's on August 25, 1999.

The annual Fall Rally of **Bruce-Grey** Presbyterial was celebrated at Tomlie Church, Port Elgin, Ontario, September 30. The theme *Hands Joined in Mission* became very real through the Bible Study, and message of guest speakers Wayne and Julie Groves of 'Partners with a Purpose'.

The meeting was opened by President Kay Remus, Walkerton and Rev. Pearl Vasarhelyi, Holstein. Erin Crisfield, Area staff, led the Bible Study on Jeremiah 31:31-34 and John 13:1-20, blending small group discussion and 'washing of hands'.

Following reports and lunch, Wayne and Julie took us on a highly informative presentation of their efforts to help meet some of the tremendous needs of the Haitian people.

A freewill offering, and reflections on the day's events and prayer by Julie Morden, minister designate, Port Elgin, brought the meeting to a close.

Kingston Presbyterial Fall meeting was held at St. Andrew's Church, Trenton, ON. The theme was *Stewardship - Time, Talent and Treasure*. Following a welcome from Rev. Dr. A. Donald MacLeod, the morning worship was led by Judy MacLeod, Christine Self and Evelyn Snelling. Soloist was John Moors, and pianist was Brenda Harbinson.

Business was conducted by President Lyla Page. Special guest speaker was Rev. John Congram, editor of the Presbyterian Record. His theme was *Natural Church Growth.*

Recall after lunch was initiated with a hymn sing led by John Moors. John Congram finished his presentation and concluded the meeting with worship and the benediction.

The Fall Rally of **Glengarry** Presbyterial was held in Knox Church, Vankleek Hill on September 22. The theme was *Bless the Lord, all His works in all places of His dominion*, from Psalm 103.

President Peg Ferguson welcomed everyone. Rev. Bob Martin of Knox brought greetings from Presbytery. An inspiring worship service which reflected the theme was led by Annabelle Hartrick, Louisa Douglas, Barbara Rochfort and Flora Chisholm, Dunvegan.

Muriel Belanger introduced guest speaker, Mary Moorhead from Spencerville, President of Council Executive, who spoke of her visit to Japan and Taiwan. We saw a video of George Leslie MacKay who began mission work in Taiwan in 1872.

Following a delicious noon luncheon, Peg Ferguson closed the meeting with prayer.

The Fall Rally of **Montreal** Presbyterial was held on September 18 at Georgetown Church, Georgetown, Quebec. Presiding was President Grace Thornley-Brown. Host minister Rev. Bonnie Mason led the worship service. The theme of her talk was taken from Acts 16 about Lydia.

The history of the church was given by Clara Simms, who spoke of the Scottish settlers in the early 1800s who built the church, the first one in the area. Lottie Sutherland extended greetings from Synodical.

Lois Klempa introduced guest speaker Mary Moorhead, President of Council Executive who spoke of her travels to partner churches in Japan and Taiwan. After lunch, a sing-a-long was led by Jocelyn McKay with Jan Manson at the piano.

In Remembrances were given for Kathleen Rowat and Mary Benson who were devoted WMS members. Druse Bryan and Lois Klempa introduced this year's study on Cuba.

Sarnia Presbyterial met for their Fall Rally at St. Andrew's, Strathroy, Ontario on October 12, with the theme *Sharing God's Mission in Cuba.* Host church minister Rev. Kristine O'Brien welcomed everyone before asking the Lord's blessing on the potluck supper.

Presbyterial President Anna McCoskery presided for the evening program when John

and Diane Mintz of Strathroy shared slides of their recent trip to Cuba, helping provide doctors with aspirin, tylenol, vitamins and other medical supplies not available there.

Special music was supplied by Susan and Jessica Henderson. Closing worship was conducted by members of the Helen Scott group of West Adelaide Church.

An enthusiastic group of women from the Presbyterial of **Oak Ridges** met Saturday morning, October 2, for their Fall Rally in St. James, Stouffville, Ontario. President Ellen Parker welcomed everyone and presided over the meeting.

It was a time of fellowship, worship and praise, in Thanksgiving for God's bounty and goodness, filling our lives daily.

International Ministries staff person, Mark Gordon, home briefly from Mozambique, was guest speaker. His presentation enlightened us concerning the history of the country and its citizens, and how the Presbyterian Church in Mozambique is involved in relief and development programs.

All the groups within the Presbyterial took part throughout the morning. The event concluded with a delicious lunch served by the women of St. James.

Paris Presbyterial held their Fall Rally on October 16 at Central Church, Brantford, Ontario. Theme for the day was *Fanning the Flames of Mission.* President Gloria Wasacase welcomed the members and Rev. Mark Gaskin, minister of the host church, brought greetings. Worship was conducted by the Embro group.

Bible Study was led by Rev. Carolyn McAvoy, who has recently become the interim minister at St. Giles, Cambridge. Through study of scripture, she helped us to understand the work of Interim Ministry.

Following lunch served by Central Women's Federation, Susie Strickler of Embro conducted a lively sing-a-long of favourite hymns. Speaker for the afternoon was Rev. Mark Boye of Ghana, West Africa. A graduate of the University of Ghana and Trinity Theological College, he is currently studying at Knox College, Toronto. He shared the story of his homeland and the growth of the Christian church there.

The Fall Rally of **Westminster** Presbyterial was held at St. John's, White Rock, on September 22. Rev. D. Tait-Katerberg led in devotions based on the letter of James, showing how works must go hand in hand with faith. Grace Murdoch and Shirley Dalgleish assisted her, using the illustration of a candle and a match: each alone have no value but used together they produce light. Margaret Walker was at the piano.

- Left to right: Joy Randall, Rev. Elizabeth McLagan, and Molly Doka, White Rock WMS.

Rev. Elizabeth McLagan, President of BC Synodical brought greetings. Janet Tremblay, Synod Staff, reviewed the Mission Study.

Following lunch, the 'Happy Notes' singing group of St. John's, presented a musical selection and led a hymn sing.

Guest speaker was Joy Randall of Taiwan, who was introduced by Tam Corbett. Joy showed slides of the extensive work of the staff and the hospitals there.

West Toronto Presbyterial Fall Rally was held on October 23 at Runnymede Church. President Bev McWhinnie welcomed everyone and led in the singing. Devotions were by June Maxwade and Carol Chin Yan from Bonar-Parkdale.

Reports, Dorothy Clarke introduced speaker, Joy Randall, Director of Nursing at Changhua Christian Hospital in Taiwan who showed slides and gave a wonderful presentation on her work. The afternoon closed with a hymn and prayer. The women of the church served a variety of refreshments.

Pickering Presbyterial met in Knox, Oshawa for a bag lunch with dessert prepared by the Lawrie Cormack WMS on November 13. Lynda Reid and Anna Cook led in a hymn sing. Coordinator Doris McAndless introduced Rev. Vickie Homes of St. James, Oshawa, who led in worship based on 1 Samuel 1, illustrating our theme: *Women of the Bible.*

Jean Dancey shared a book presented to her for Pickering Presbyterial by Mark Gordon from the The Projects Department of The Presbyterian Church of Mozambique. It was partially financed by Presbyterial funds.

Doris introduced special guest Betty Turcotte from Bowmanville. Betty is an author, involved with the United Church of Canada. We sang one of Betty's hymns, *Women of the Bible.* She told of her interest in women of the Bible, since the age of 10. She concluded with a dramatic presentation of three women, Sarah, Huldah and Anna.

Barbara Draffin thanked Betty. Rev. Lynda Reid closed with prayer and the Benediction.

The Fall Rally of the **Brockville** Presbyterial was held on October 28 in St. Paul's, Kemptville. Coffee and dessert provided time for getting reacquainted and to hear of the activities of the different groups.

Henny Donkersteeg chaired the meeting and opened with prayer and a hymn.

Rev. Sharpe of St. Paul's welcomed everyone. Moorewood group conducted the worship on the theme: *Courage of Christians.* St. Paul's choir members presented a musical selection and led in hymn singing.

Catherine Blatch introduced Joe Reed who spoke on his work in Central America and Cuba, praising the work of WMS groups and thanking them for their support.

Rev. M. Johnston offered a prayer for mission work and closed with the Benediction.

Anniversary

Calvin Ladies' Guild, Abbotsford, BC, celebrated its 40th anniversary on the weekend of September 25-26. On the Saturday evening, the Session hosted a dinner for Guild members and their guests.

Guild members assisted at both services on Sunday morning, and the guest speaker was Barbara Marshall, President of Westminster Presbyterial, who spoke on "What it Means for me to Serve the Lord".

Two founding members, Rita Bingham and Mae Crocker, were presented with Life Memberships. The Guild served coffee and cake between the services.

A service of celebration was held on Sunday October 17 at **West Adelaide** Presbyterian Church in recognition of 100 years of this congregation supporting the WMS. Following Kay Arrand's organ prelude, Marlyn McLeish, president of the Helen Scott Society, welcomed everyone.

Greetings were brought from the West Adelaide Session, Sarnia Presbyterial and Sarnia Presbytery. Dorothy Neal, Presbyterial Historian, drew attention to some events of the past. Evelyn Clifton, chairperson of the planning committee presented historical highlights of the WMS group at its formation and over the century.

A moving memorial service honoured 131 members who had participated in the work of the group through the years. Rev. Douglas Miles dedicated the plaque, presented by Evelyn Clifton, to these early women. Doris Robotham of Strathroy presented musical numbers in memory of family members and the other women who were part of the 100 years of service.

Shirley Miles introduced Evelyn Murdoch of Hamilton, former Area Educational Consultant for this region who spoke about the many women in Canada and overseas who have given service through the years. The offering was donated to the Dr. Pauline Brown Bursary Fund, to assist people of India to receive training in health care. Nevie Watson thanked everyone who contributed.

A time of fellowship and refreshment followed, with historical items on display. Much interest was shown in the 'autograph quilts' loaned by Gladdis Zimmerman and Marguerite Cuddy.

- Standing in front of the plaque denoting 100 years of service of West Adelaide WMS are: left to right: Rev. Douglas Miles, Evelyn Clifton and Anna McCoskery.

Local

Helen Leishman of Brandon, Manitoba, passed away on August 15. She was WMS President at First Church, Brandon for a number of years, and a life member of the WMS.

Helen grew up in Oakfield, Nova Scotia on an estate managed by her father. Helen went to school in Nova Scotia, finishing Grade 11, and later attended Normal School. She received Deaconess training in Toronto, then traveled west to serve as a Deaconess in various small towns and taught in a residential school in Kenora, where she met her husband.

Helen never stopped learning. She received her Grade 12 certificate at the age of

CIRCULATION NEWS

Katherine Allen
Circulation Manager

Thank you to the Glad Tidings Secretaries/contact people for returning the subscription lists in good time. As of November 16, there are 75 lists outstanding. The subscriptions were due November 1, so hopefully we will soon hear from these groups, as it is costly to send renewals.

Please check the label on the magazine to make sure your address is correct. If your address is incorrect on the label, let us know immediately so that this can be corrected. If you are moving, it would be helpful to have your change of address as soon as possible, at least a couple of months before, to ensure that you receive all issues.

On several of the subscription lists that have returned, the Glad Tidings secretaries did not fill in the part where they need to include their name and address, church and name of group. In most cases we were able to take the name and address off the cheque, or from an enclosed note. We hope that these persons are the Glad Tidings secretaries because it is helpful to have the correct information in case we have to contact someone during the year with regard to a subscription.

It is never too late to subscribe to Glad Tidings. If you know of someone who wants to receive the magazine, send in the subscription through the Glad Tidings contact person in your church or mail directly to the Glad Tidings Circulation Department.

54 [redacted] continued taking university courses. He loved to read and write stories and poems.

She will be loving remembered by her large family of six daughters, 17 grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren, two brothers and three sisters, as well as many nieces and nephews.

A service of remembrance was held August 19 at First Presbyterian Church, Brandon, with Rev. Dale Woods officiating.

Hazel Jones of Varsity Acres Presbyterian Church, Calgary, Alberta passed away in May 1999. Following her retirement in 1974, she became immersed in every aspect of the church's work. She was honoured in 1997 as voluntary correspondent to all the missionaries of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Hazel had a deep affection and admiration for the commitment and work of missionaries, both at home and abroad. For 22 years, she wrote approximately 44 people every birthday, Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving and other occasions as well. In characteristic, unassuming humility, Hazel would say, "Well, I just love writing letters."

When Hazel's health failed in 1966, Pauline Brown inquired if Hazel was all right because a birthday card had not arrived for the first time in 22 years. A letter was mailed immediately to every missionary indicating Hazel's failing health and explaining that several Presbyterial volunteers would continue the work.

Hazel then received many cards from missionaries who considered her like family, some of whom met her while on deputation in Western Canada. Hazel treasured those cards as we know the missionaries always treasured hers.

Hazel's dedication, reliability and deep love for the work of our Lord will remain with those fortunate to have known her.

Thank You

Thanks to all the publicity secretaries who have recently sent in briefer and more succinct news litems. Not having to edit and/or condense these saves a lot of time and effort for the editor.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Marlowe Dickson
St. Andrew's, Beeton, ON

Helen Leishman
First, Brandon, MN

Mrs. Hazel Jones
Varsity Acres, Calgary, AB

Mrs. Margaret Ferguson
Mrs. Audrey Jeffery
St. Andrew's, Cobourg, ON

Mrs. Dora Burns
St. Andrew's, Dresden, ON

Anna Grisdale
Knox, Dundas, ON

Mrs. Marion Knox
Knox's Galt, Cambridge, ON

Mrs. Elva Rynard
Knox, Guelph, ON

Janet Irving Bailey
South Gate, Hamilton, ON

Mrs. Marion (Welch) (Currah) Simbert
Bethel, Ilderton, ON
(formerly of Petrolia)

Mrs. Rose Bonner
Mrs. Mae Hacker
Miss Margaret Johnson
Knox, Midland, ON

Mrs. Jimmy (Doris) Ward
Monkton, ON

Mrs. Alma Pugh
Knox, Palmerston, ON

Mrs. Edith Foulis
First, Port Colborne, ON

Miss Marjorie McIntosh
Tolmie Memorial, Port Elgin, ON

Mrs. Margaret Blackley
Knox, St. Catharines, ON

Mrs. Margaret Netterfield
Armour Heights, Toronto, ON

Barbara Joan Woodruff
Iona, Toronto, ON

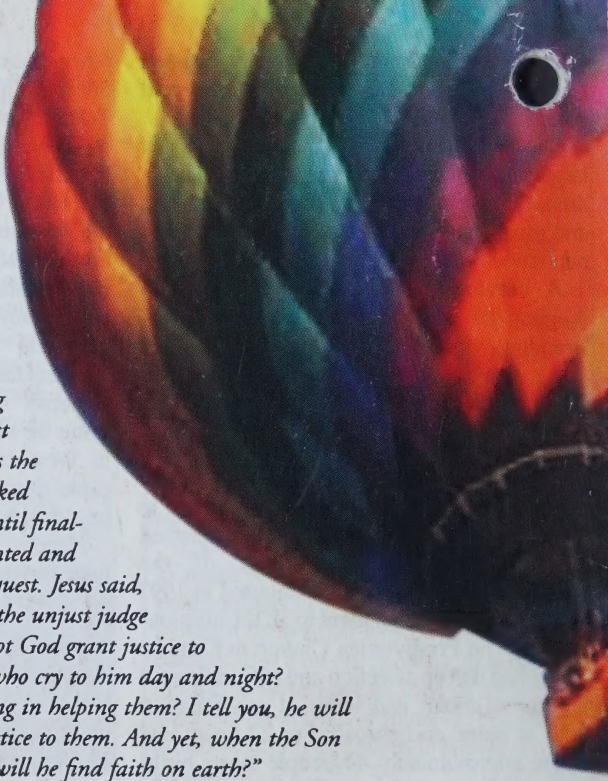
Mrs. Ora Campbell
St. Andrew's, Warkworth, ON

Mrs. Mable Richardson
Weston, ON

Helen Kasas
White Rock, BC

Mrs. Anne McEachern
Mrs. Ruth MacEachern
Woodville, ON

Taking Mission to New Heights



There is a story about a widow who kept going to a judge asking for justice against her opponent. As the story goes, she asked over and over until finally the judge relented and gave into her request. Jesus said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Mary comes, will he find faith on earth?" (from Luke 18:1-8, NRSV)

Women still face many injustices. The World Council of Churches named 1988-1998 as the Ecumenical Decade when Churches were to be in solidarity with women in church and society. In November 1998, a global conference in Harare, Zimbabwe, celebrated the end of the decade but not the end of the work. There is still much to be done in all regions of the world.

The Women's Missionary Society began their work by ministering to and with women and children in Quebec. Then it expanded the ministry overseas and later into remote parts of Canada. The WMS was like the widow who kept going to the unjust judge and saying, "There must be justice for these people. There must be justice for us. God has called us to do this ministry." Today there is still much justice to be done.

Glad Tidings is printed on recycled paper

Please report any errors/changes in address.

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March/April 2000

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GLAD TIDINGS reports on aspects of the Women's Missionary Society on all levels.

GLAD TIDINGS challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally and internationally.

GLAD TIDINGS through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired and motivated to action.

GLAD TIDINGS provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS (WD) or by the Editor.

Cover Photo:
Margaret Robertson

Written in Love

L. June Stevenson, Editor

March 2000

Indescribable...

Some moments in life defy description. There are no words to express the horror I feel when I read of parents accused of killing their young daughter and disposing of her dismembered body in garbage bags in city parks. Gut wrenching, perhaps; a feeling that tears at the very centre of my being.

Nor are there words to adequately describe life's moments of tenderness and joy: a baby's first smile or a lover brushing a tear from your cheek. These fleeting occasions tug at the corners of your heart with an exquisite sweetness that is almost too much to bear. To describe something in words seems somehow to separate the description from the feelings surrounding the event.

Last year I attended six funerals. Losing someone you care about, or standing beside dear friends who have lost a loved one, is painful. For a few days, life is totally turned upside down. Everything else is put on hold.

Days, weeks, months later, a mixture of feelings suddenly washes over you, leaving you drained and sad, and then blessedly grateful for the beautiful memories you have.

I also attended my daughter's graduation in Education. No card, no bouquet of flowers, no hug could express the pride and satisfaction I felt at her accomplishments. The years of her growing up and all the little moments of distress and delight swept over me. When my son was married, I experienced the same kaleidoscope of poignant emotions. At times, thankfully not too often, life can feel like a roller-coaster ride

Easter is such a time: imagining what the disciples felt as they puzzled over Jesus' words and actions in the weeks before his death; as they stood by at the end, not comprehending the dichotomy between the lessons of his living and the degradation of his dying.

Picturing Jesus at prayer in the garden, the humility of his trial, and finally his horrible death, defies description. Mere words are inadequate, like the little boy in the story on page 7 who could only say, "Ouch!"

And then came Easter. Clarity and illumination. Understanding. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 9:15 that God's gift to us is "too wonderful for words", "inexpressible", "indescribable...." Yet, if we can't express it in words, we surely can feel it in our hearts.

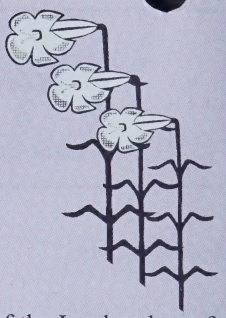
Love and peace to all of you at Easter.

Write and tell us what you think:

A challenge for you: The theme for Council 2000 is Rediscover Our Inner Child. Write and tell us, as briefly as possible (500 words or less), what you think Jesus meant when he said in Matthew 18: 3 that we must become like children in order to enter the kingdom of heaven. What does this mean to you?

Send your responses in before May 1 and I will take them to the Council meeting to add to our discussions. Material on the subject will be published with the Council report.

Go Tell!



An Easter Service of Worship

by Fleur Eenkhoorn

Call to worship:
Leader: O, praise the Lord all you nations.
Praise Him all you people.

People: For His loving kindness is great toward us and the truth of the Lord endures for ever. Praise the Lord. (Psalm 117)

Hymn #452 Jesus, stand among us (Book of Praise 1997, #323 - 1972)

Opening Prayer
O God of Peace, you have taught us that in coming to you we shall be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be our strength. By the strength of your Spirit lift us to your presence, where we may be still and know that you alone are God. Amen.

Scripture Reader 1 Matthew 5:43-44
Reader 2 Matthew 27:27-31
Reader 3 Matthew 28:5-7

Meditation
Jesus said, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5:43). These words come early in the gospel of Matthew, early in Jesus' ministry. We expect that they are born out of his own personal experience. There were many incidents recorded, including the one from Matthew 27 where the soldiers mock him just before his crucifixion.

Sometimes it is very hard to "love your enemies". What do you do when a neighbour swears at you and calls you names because you are different? What do you do when someone spits on your child because your skin colour is different?

These are not just stories; these things do happen. I know, because they happened to me, and to others. They also happened to Christ. He suffered much on our behalf. Even though he was innocent he was put on trial, endured being mocked, stripped and tortured and then was crucified.

Christ did more than love his neighbours, he gave his life for them.

Consider the following: God sent His Son, His only Son, to die for us, to rescue, save and heal us. God must love each of us very much to allow His Son to be ridiculed and spat upon for our salvation.

Also, God the Son must love each of us very much, beyond understanding, to lay down his life for us.

If Christ had died only for the worthy, would He have died at all? For all have sinned and fallen short.

But herein is love, that Christ lay down His life and died for you and for me. The Good

News, the Best News, the Greatest News however is that He arose from the grave. The tomb is empty! He lives and because he lives we, you and I, have the promise of God's love and eternal life.

Prayer
Creator God, we thank you that through the rising of your Son from the dead You have given us a living hope. Strengthen our faith, help us to persevere when difficulties arise, and to walk in the way of our Saviour. In Christ's name we pray. Amen

Hymn # 422 Sing a new song unto the Lord (Book of Praise 1997, #41 O sing a new song to the Lord vs 1-4 - 1972)

Go Tell!

Everyone present may take part, even those who do not want to read. Give a large letter out to be held up as it is called so that at the end it will spell the important words of our Easter faith. Or have someone pin them up or write them. You may come up with other ideas.

G is for God who sent His only Son.
O is for Others. Christ died that all the world should have life through Him.

T is for Telling the Good News. Christ died for our sins.
E is for Easter. Christ rose! Christ lives!
L is for Love, God's love for us.
L is for Love, our love for him. Jesus said, "a new commandment I give unto you that you love one another as I have loved you."

J is for Jesus who rose from the dead.
E is for Exalted. Christ is our exalted Saviour.
S is for See. "He is not here, He is risen!
U is for Us. Easter is good news. Jesus said, "Because I live, you shall live also".
S is for Scripture. The scriptures tell us about Jesus.

L is for Life. Jesus tells us there is life after death.
I is for I Believe. Each must believe the Easter message for herself or himself.
V is for Victory. Jesus won the victory over sin and death.
E is for Eternal. Because of Easter and our faith we have eternal life.
S is for Sunday. Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week and that is why Christians chose Sunday for their Holy Day. Each Sunday we are reminded that our Saviour lives.

Offering and Offertory Prayer
Lord, you love the cheerful giver, who with open heart and hand blesses freely, as a river that refreshes all the land. Grant us then the grace of giving with a spirit large and free, that our life and all our living we may consecrate to you. (Adapted from 1918 Book of Praise #562)

Responsive Prayer

Leader: Gracious God, we often come to you with troubled hearts. It is hard to go into the world and proclaim your good news when we are weary. Strengthen us, and fill us with your love so that it directs all that we do.

People: We are vessels of your love. Help us to tell of your message with compassion and grace.

Leader: Merciful God, there are many in the world who live in despair, many who are lonely, sick and desperate. Help us to recognize people in need and to respond with kindness.

People: We are vessels of your love. Help us to cheerfully and unselfishly serve neighbours in need.

Leader: Generous God, you have given us so much. Sometimes we forget how rich we are. Thank you for work to do, for shelter, for freedom. Thank you for the gifts and talents you have given us. Thank you for your many blessings.

People: We are vessels of your love. Help us to share with others what you have graciously given. May we use our time, ability and resources in ways that glorify your name. All this we pray in the name of your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Hymn # 361 A Stranger knocking on a door (Book of Praise 1997, #320 Lord as we rise to leave - 1972)

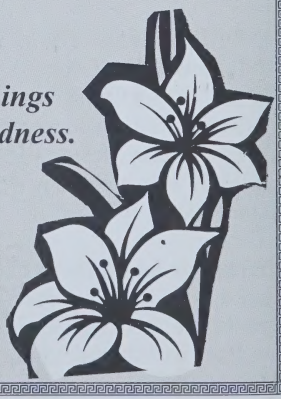
Benediction

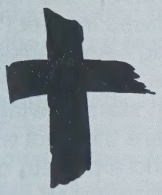
May the blessing of God go with us
and may our words and our actions
remind others of the risen Christ we love and serve. Amen

Easter Prayer

Risen Lord, give us a heart for simple things
Love, laughter, bread, wine, dreams, kindness.
Fill us with green, growing hope,
And make us an Easter people,
Whose song is Alleluia,
Whose sign is Peace,
And whose name is Love.

- Author Unknown





"Ouch!" A Child's Good Friday Faith

by Roberta G. McClelland

Miracles happen every day if we but choose to look for them. Perhaps one of the best seasons in which to look is Lent, when God's love and mercy flows all around us like a boundless sea of grace.

I recall, in particular, the final portion of a Good Friday Liturgy in 1992, when our congregation pressed together around a barren altar to venerate its cross. Out of the shadows that skirted the altar's base, a father and his very young son emerged hand in hand, and together they approached the large wooden crucifix that awaited them.

It was clear, by his white-knuckled grip on his father's hand, his hesitant steps, and his wide-eyed expression, that the boy was uncertain as to this impending experience. In spite of his father's gentle coaxing he could not muster the courage to imitate his father's veneration.

But he gazed upward, craning his neck in his smallness, to stare solemnly into the sorrowful face of Christ who seemed to return his sad stare from eyes that never blinked.

And perhaps there was some unseen exchange of understanding in that visual summation, for as his father began to leave the altar the boy remained rooted in his place, his whole being transfixed on the face of the man who looked down at him from the cross on which He hung.

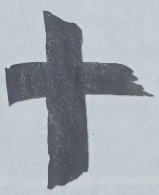
There was a moment's hesitation as he seemed to absorb it all with some nervous uncertainty, and then his anxious eyes filled with tears. Almost inaudibly he whispered, "ouch", and with infinite childlike tenderness a tiny hand reached out to carefully pat the wounded feet of Christ.

The crowd who had watched this gesture fell absolutely silent, and he was no more aware of them than he was aware of the profound message of Christ's Passion which he had in his innocence, delivered to them. But it resonated in the older minds and hearts of those around him who had long since forgotten the unimaginable pain which Christ endured for them, and the profound love which made necessary his suffering. It was, after all, so easy to forget when Jesus was just a wooden figure on a cross. But with the sympathetic touch of a small boy's hand, in the midst of a tired community, that figure became flesh and blood, warming and awakening the hearts of those who stood nearby and filling them with the bittersweet wine of sorrow and joy.

It is now some years later, and I still carry that vivid memory as though it was only yesterday. I cannot attend a Good Friday Liturgy without feeling that same emotional surge, or remembering the child who reached out to comfort Christ, or shedding my own quiet tears, and I pray that I never will.

And a little child shall lead them (Isaiah 11:6).

A little child shall lead them (Isaiah 11:6).



The Sound of Camel Bells

by G. Allan Connor

So when Joseph came to his brothers...they took him and threw him into the cistern. Now the cistern was empty; there was no water in it.
Genesis 37:23 NIV

Joseph stared at the thin shaft of light that filtered through a small crack above his head. The stone slab that sealed the cistern's narrow mouth lay slightly ajar but well beyond his reach. In desperation, his fingers moved systematically over the rough limestone walls but found no place to gain a foothold in the bell-shaped pit.

His head began to swim, his heart pounded. Surely his brothers would repent and rescue him! Yet minutes passed like endless hours. Silence mocked him.

Suddenly a terrifying thought blanketed his mind with darkness thicker than the murky gloom that surrounded his body. He would die here on the Dothan plain in a hole in the ground. He slumped down on the sandy floor in despair.

Somewhere beyond the tiny ray of light, a sparrow chirped breaking the spell of unbelief. He sat up slowly. Was he not Jacob's son and Abraham's great-grandson, the heir of God's covenant promises in direct line for patriarchal blessing? And those dreams - the sheaves of grain, the sun and moon and eleven stars bowing down before him - were they not a sign of divine favor and a portent of things to come? Truth regained control. Joseph knelt and cried aloud to the Sovereign Lord.

Stillness closed around him again, taunting faith's resolve. More minutes passed. Then, beyond the cistern's mouth, he heard the sound of camel bells and men's voices.

* *

When I was a child in faith I enjoyed the privileges due a member of God's family. I expected my heavenly Father to bless me with happiness and contentment and to remove sharp stones from my path. He often did. But as the years pass, I see another side of my Sovereign's will. He sometimes allows suffering to obstruct my way precisely because he cares so much for me.

When life deals an unexpected blow I can react in panic like Joseph did when the stone slab closed above his head. I can even recoil in resentment if the pain is prolonged. Or, I can listen for the sparrow's song and lift my head, secure in my Lord's promises, knowing that "in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose".[1] And like the patriarch, I will eventually hear the camel bells of deliverance.

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1. Romans 8:28 **NIV**

- Al Connor is a freelance writer from Cobourg, ON. He served as an agricultural missionary with the United Church of Canada on the central India field from 1954-64.

Simple Joy

Feathers fluffed they gather grateful
On the caring feeder.
Seeds sustain.
Fog surrounds.
Bunched and quilted in the arctic chill
Framed by lacy frost they huddle closer
To survive another day.

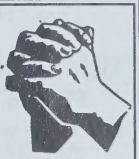
Inside the kitchen hunched and shawled
She sips her tea, nibbles on a muffin.
Fog within.
She stares, unable to recall
That her hands made the lacey cloth
Which frames her fragile cup.

She looks and sees the birds outside.
With simple joy she counts each one
Then sings a childhood hymn.
"God sees the little sparrow fall,
It meets His tender view,
If God so loves the little birds
I know He loves me too."[1]

Gwyneth Bell

[1]Hymn by Maria Straub

Prayer when a loved one is in need of comfort...



Loving Spirit,
Help me to remember now
That I cannot control this situation;
That I cannot take this pain away,
But that I can make it easier, just by being here,
By listening, and by understanding that
time and tears and love
Are what are needed now to mend my loved one's pain,
And to restore a broken spirit.
I ask this in the name of Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Roberta G. McClelland is a religion writer from London, ON who has been published in Christian magazines throughout Canada and the United States. She is presently pursuing a combined degree in Theology and Pastoral Studies. She is pictured at right with Harley This is the second in a series of prayers for daily living.

This is my Body...

After the labour ordained in the curse,
She'd rest by the manger and let her son nurse;
To shepherds and wise men who knelt in the mud,
She said, "This is my body, and this is my blood."

After she raised him and taught all she could,
She wept from afar when he left home for good,
Then said, when she saw him heal blind men with mud,
"Can he be my body, can he be my blood?"

After they met in a small upper room,
The Passover lamb was eaten in gloom;
Then taking some bread and some wine, Jesus stood
And said, "This is my body, and this is my blood!"

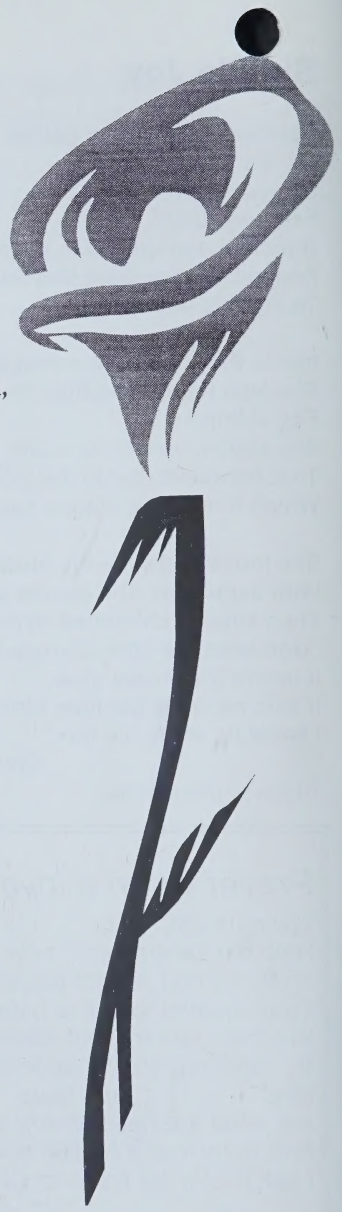
After they whipped Him, and hung Him on high,
She stayed by his side 'til He bid her good-bye,
And with eyes full of tears pouring out in a flood,
Cried, "This is my body, and this is my blood!"

After she washed Him, and wrapped Him in myrrh,
She laid Him to rest in that cold sepulchre;
But when He arose she at last understood,
That "He was her body, and He was her blood!"

After she rises from each sacred meal,
She remembers how lonely and lost people feel;
But some would deny her a way to serve God,
To say "This is my Body, and this is my Blood."

Oh thanks be to women who bear us in love;
And praise to our Father in heaven above,
And praise be to Jesus who made us from mud,
For we are his Body through His precious Blood.

A. M. Pattison



Art Pattison is a retired high school teacher and Presbyterian minister. "This is my Body" was written and set to music to accompany a sermon on the theme of women. Art operates a small business called Frameables - producing plaques, parchments and greeting cards which contain Art's own poetry as well as old favourites such as "One Solitary Life" and "The Serenity Prayer". For music and/or more information contact: A. M. Pattison, 75 Downsview, Nepean, ON K2G 0A4. Phone: 613-224-6911. Fax: 613-224-6968. Email: Frameables@hotmail.com Some materials are available in The Book Room, 50 Wynford Drive, North York, ON M3C 1J7.

Mechtild of Magdeburg

Medieval Prophetess and Mystic

The second in a series of articles on early women who influenced Christian thought

by Maria Stam

The writings of the spiritual journey of Mechtild of Magdeburg, like those of Hildegard of Bingen, have survived the centuries. They have come to us in a volume under the title *Flowing Light of the Godhead.* Like Hildegard, Mechtild challenges us not to take creation for granted, but to treasure and revere it. During the middle ages injustice and oppression were no exception, and Mechtild's messages, as well, were often directed to organized religion.

Matthew Fox writes in his introduction to the book *Meditations with Mechtild of Magdeburg*: "We need prophets like Mechtild today in society and all its institutions including the church ones...who are critical and self-critical including one's own institutions as regards injustice - who are in touch with people's suffering, including one's own." We look back and listen to the prophetic persons of past centuries who because of their radical commitment to the truth often suffered injustice themselves.

> "I cannot dance, O Lord, unless you lead me. If you will that I leap joyfully then you must be the first to dance and to sing."
>
> Mechtild of Magdeburg

Mechtild was born in a small town on the Elbe river in East Germany in 1210. During her youth she enjoyed the courtly social life of that time, leaving her with vivid images. At a more mature age she used these images in her relationship with the Lord, translating dancing and pageantry into a language of the soul: "I cannot dance, O Lord, unless you lead me. If you will that I leap joyfully then you must be the first to dance and to sing."

Not satisfied with worldly pomp, she felt called by God to give her life a different direction. She went to Magdeburg where she joined the Beguines, a group of lay women who cared for the sick and the poor. The movement came into existence partly because of the crusades which left many women in Germany without husbands.

Beguines were first welcomed by the hierarchy but later condemned and often driven out of the towns by the bishops. Nurtured by a solid study of the Bible, the women felt compelled to serve compassionately oppressed and suffering people.

Mechtild called her new life "The Desert". She was brought into contact with members of the Dominican order. One of the Dominican priests, Heinrich from Halle, Saxony, became her spiritual director. He encouraged her to write down her thoughts, prayers, and poems, which he collected into several books.

Her images were like a wonderful flow of light that accompanied her throughout her life. In this way she resembled Meister Eckhart, another Dominican, fifty years her junior. Both mystics experienced the same

closeness to creation and the Creator.

Mechtild says: "The soul shines in the blessing that is creation," and "God comes to the soul as dew on the flowers and in the songs of the birds". The medieval mystics did not believe in dualism which separates the soul from the body; they addressed the whole human person.

Mechtild's gift of writing came to her gently, but it was not without suffering. Even she, who seemed so closely connected to the Creator, sometimes thought God was distant. For many years she suffered from ill health, but she learned from her suffering to the point that she was able to embrace it. She realized that out of emptiness new life could be born. That is why she advised: "You shall love the nothingness...be free from the bondage of all things."

She tried to grow in wisdom, not for her own sake but to spread it for the sake of others. Speaking out against injustice and abuses within the church created many enemies. Political opponents often forced her to move from one place to another.

Finally, late in her life she arrived at the convent in Helfde in Saxony. Here she taught the sisters to be compassionate and to help people in need. She asked them not to judge, instead to stand by all who needed their assistance. Yet, she also encouraged them to be merry and joyful with the people they served. Every day she visited the sick-house, healed wounds, comforted the sad and lifted the hearts of all who came to her.

Throughout her writings we can find an outpouring of compassion: "In so far as we love compassion and practice it steadfastly to that extent we resemble the heavenly Creator who practices these things ceaselessly in us."

Mechtild's poor health always made her aware that death was not far away. One of her images of death was that of the sea:

"God comes to the soul as dew on the flowers and in the songs of the birds".

"the rippling tide of love which flows secretly from God into the soul and draws it mightily back into its Source." In another image she hears God explaining, "I will draw my breath and your soul shall come to Me as a needle to a magnet." She still lived until the age of 70 and died in 1280.

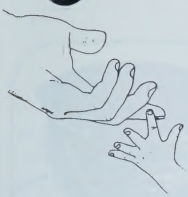
For Mechtild God was never inactive, but living and actively involved in all life. May her wonderful image of God speak to all believers:

God is not only fatherly
God is also mother
Who lifts her loved child
From the ground to her knee.
The Trinity is like a mother's
cloak
Wherein the child finds a home
And lays its head on her maternal
breast.

Reference

Sue Woodruff, Meditations with Mechtild of Magdeburg, Bear & Company Inc., Santa Fe, New Mexico 1982.

Maria Stam is a freelance writer from London. She is the author of several books and has had many articles and poems published.



On Your Baptism

You are a miracle,
Called to earth to live awhile
Among God's other lovely things.
A dewy rose, a goldfinch on the wing,
A wiggly puppy, a frolic on the lawn,
The taste of maple syrup in the spring.

Eternal gifts surround you
In this dawning of your years,
In the love that strives to meet
Your every need,
To dry your baby tears.
From that love other blessings you will know
While on the path of life you trod.
May you find rest by peaceful waters,
The gentleness of meadows ever green.
May you early know the faith
That calms all worldly fear,
The joy of journeying with God.

Audrey Hutcheson

-Written to honour our tiny great-granddaughter upon her baptism at Easter.

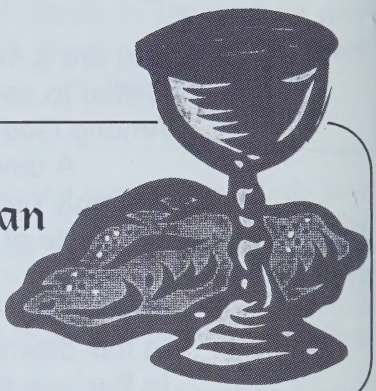
Waiting

Blackbirds are waiting to call by the river
The glad news of spring's warmth and glow.
The gardener waits to take down his shovel,
The world waits for blossoms under the snow.

Audrey Hutcheson

"Moving Up" to a Presbyterian

by Eileen Paul-Wylie



Julia was at the first Presbyterian Women's Missionary Society meeting I attended after I moved to a new town, wanting to be closer to relatives.

"I was brought up in the United Church of Canada," I told the group. "In my early twenties I married an Anglican, was confirmed in that church and attended services for many years. Now, I'm a Presbyterian."

"Good for you," remarked Julia. "You're moving up."

Everyone laughed but it started me wondering. "What is a Presbyterian? What does this Women's Missionary Society do?" I decided I had better do some research. I went back to the very beginning of Christianity, then on to Calvin and others.

Although I was familiar with the story, as I'm sure you are, I wanted to refresh my knowledge. I knew that John Calvin was considered the 'father' of Presbyterianism so I was anxious to learn more about him. I haunted the library. Perhaps the following short account of his work will refresh your memory, too.

Calvin lived from 1509 until 1564. At that time Protestantism divided into two groups - Lutheran and Reformed (Presbyterian) because of differences of viewpoint on the Lord's Supper and other doctrines. Nearly all Protestants believe in the Trinity.

Some Presbyterians teach that communicants experience Christ spiritually during the sacrament. While Christ's body may be in heaven, his spirit is present with the bread and the wine. Communicants receive of Christ's very being for their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace. I, personally accept this belief. Do you?

Calvin did not teach religious liberty as we know it but, by resisting interference by the state in church life, he hastened the coming of religious liberty. He contributed greatly to the rise of democracy.

He devoted a large part of his life to explaining the meaning of the Bible. When he was around 30 years of age he developed one of his most distinctive achievements - Presbyterian church government. He provided for four types of church officers: pastors, teachers, elders and deacons. The clergy were equal and twelve elected elders were to share with the clergy in church government.

For many years I had been interested in the government of the church as my sister who is a Presbyterian of long standing played a very active part in it. Although she had tried to explain it to me, it seemed to go

Formal mission work by Presbyterian women in Canada began in the 1860s when "The Ladies' Auxiliary Association" of Montreal organized to assist the Church of Scotland in their French Mission work. Later, following the inception of The Presbyterian Church in Canada in 1875, women and men were sent out to be teachers and nurses in remote parts of Canada, for example among the Native people. The Woman's Missionary Society, Montreal broadened the scope of its forerunner, to carry on "Home, French, and Foreign" work.

in one ear and out the other. Now I needed to understand it.

Today we have: **sessions** (minister and ruling elders of one congregation), **presbyteries** (ministers and lay elders from the local churches who have power of supervising ministers as well as many activities of the congregations, including examining, ordaining and installing ministers), **synods** (another representative body which supervises the presbyteries, and **General Assembly** (the highest judicial and legislative body which is also composed of clerical and lay delegates).

Having learned a little of what it means to be a Presbyterian I wanted to find out more about this missionary society I had joined. I knew that missionaries had been sent out for many years to spread the message of Christianity.

Of interest is Pope Gregory the Great who sent Augustine to Britain, Patrick to Ireland, Columba to Scotland, Boniface to Germany, Ansgar to Scandinavia and Cyril and Methodus to the Slavs. It is a result of their work that Europe and the Americas became christianized. This early period of missions with its lasting effect should help us all to understand how important missionary work is today.

The Women's Missionary Society is an autonomous organization within the Presbyterian Church in Canada. It reports to the General Assembly. The WMS is structured in a similar way to the Presbyterian Church: **local** groups form at the congregational level; **presbyterials** consist of elected members who oversee the activities of local groups, and **synodicals** which oversee the activities of Presbyterials. The annual **Council Meeting** brings together Council Executive, as well as synodical presidents, and delegates from across the country.

Members of the WMS are considered active if they attend regularly and support the work of the Society; **associate** if they are interested in what the Society does but do not regularly take part in events.

I have been a member of the WMS for over a year now. I am very impressed by the nineteen women who make up the local group. I feel that they form a large portion of the backbone of this 'new' church I

For many years the WMS hired and sent out its own missionaries. Since 1972, the Presbyterian Church has taken over that task with much financial support from the Society.

In 1999 the Women's Missionary Society contributed to the Presbyterian Church in Canada:

approximately $266,400 towards the work of Area Staff, and a grant of $150,000 to the Life and Mission Agency.

attend. The church has a total of 286 parishioners, so the numbers of the WMS group are small in comparison - small but mighty.

The programs and studies at monthly meetings are interesting and stimulating. Their missionary work in the church and community is outstanding. Their prayers for the sick and the needy in the community, and in far off fields are heard, and their monetary aid is put to good use.

These are indeed "women with a purpose!"

Did I "move up" as Julia suggested? I'm not certain. I do know that I am happy to be a Presbyterian and to be one of the "women with a purpose".

- Eileen Paul-Wylie is a freelance writer from Perth, Ontario

wms

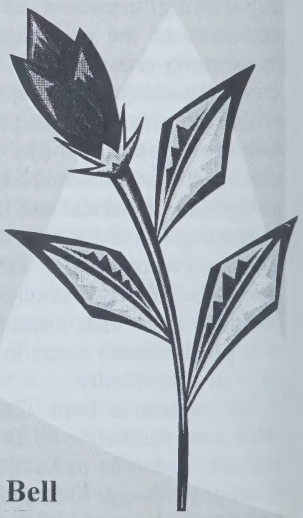
The Women's Missionary Society is a community of Christians whose purpose, in responsde to the love of God in Jesus Christ, is to encourage one another and all the people of the church to be involved in local and world mission through prayer, study, service and fellowship.

Spring is here at last...

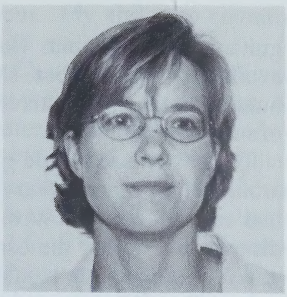
Good Earth

That first fall in my new home
I planted a mass of bulbs
to recreate a fragrant memory
of another garden,
a drift of snowdrops,
hyacinths, narcissi.
But when the snow had passed
and summer sprang
only a few strong
golden heads pierced the heavy clay
and saw the day.
And when the scarlet tulips
grew boldly by the wall
the hot sun baked them crisp.
I had forgotten that even bulbs
need good earth and gentleness.

Gwyneth Bell



A Weekend in Nan Tou



by Marlene Buwalda

Marlene Buwalda arrived in Taiwan in the summer of 1999, replacing Lillian Sparling as English and Bible teacher at Hsinchu Bible College. She shortly found herself in the middle of a major disaster.

Just after midnight, Tuesday, September 21, 1999, within the first month of my arrival in Taiwan, the earthquake hit. It was a few days before we had electricity, and were able to really see how terrible the wreckage was. Many families lost homes, lives, and faith. I felt so close to the destruction and yet so far, not able to help the needy in Nan Tou, the epic centre of the quake. I prayed to God that somehow I could go to Nan Tou to serve. This was to be a celebratory weekend for the moon festival. How could it be now?

Thursday, a miracle happened, the school was sending a van and we would leave that day. I never felt more sure that I needed to do anything, except when I decided to become a missionary only a year before.

It took us all night to ride by bus. In Taichung we met a woman who had been waiting for two hours for a bus to Nan Tou. The roads were so bad that the buses didn't really have any schedule. All ten of us watched with awe out the windows, catching a glimpse of destroyed homes and apartments. It was quite dark but we did see numerous 'tent cities' where temporary homes were set up for rescuers as well as victims. The streets were pitch black and deserted.

That night we slept on school grounds near the destination church along with many others trying to stay safe from the danger of collapsing buildings. Military trucks and ambulances littered the streets while some soldiers were seen stretched out in unused trucks hoping to rejuvenate.

Our rule for sleeping was just one; if we heard the whistle, we were to run as fast as we could out of our tents with our bags to safety. A neighbouring town had been having some problems with looters carrying machetes, charging through the tent sites, maiming as they stole. We thanked God as the sun came up at 6:00 a.m. and we headed to the base church.

The next two days were full of hard labour, organizing needed food and hundreds of sleeping bags and piles and piles of clothing. Every few minutes one truckload would drop off rescue items such as rice, milk powder, and water.

The minute we would finish unloading, another truck would come with a load of needed goods for different areas within the city and mountains. It was fantastic to see all the offerings from the people to the earthquake victims and it was even better that I could help.

Friday night we thanked God for our safety and the safety of our families. We had a mini moon festival celebration, eating 'yummy' moon cake and singing songs while students let loose their talents with

I never felt more sure that I needed to do anything, except when I decided to become a missionary only a year before.

guitar accompaniment. Cold showers were available - keeping them short and sleeping outside on the hard concrete was the choice of many.

The pastor had a little girl and boy both around eight or nine years old, and the girl had earlier described how her mother had disappeared during the earthquake. It felt good to bring a little laughter to them.

Late Saturday I was invited to go to the mountain area Tili, with four other students. We took a bus from Nan Tou to the lower level of Tili. What a bumpy ride that was! John's father was kind enough to drive us up the mountain road to where Ken Down and Grace lived, so dangerous due to the recent earthquake.

It was then about 9:00 p.m. and cooler up in the mountains. The roads were very narrow and steep. Noon, Grace, Ken Down and I rode in the back of the pickup watching the gorgeous scenery go by. Next to me was the steep wall of the mountain, trees and large boulders hanging over us as we drove. On the other side was the cliff. There was sometimes barely enough room to drive due to recently dislodged "truck size" boulders and landslides.

Looking into the distance was like riding through a fantasy movie. Enormous mountain shadows covered the countryside with a soft pillowy mist hovering around their middles. All the while a huge full moon hung between the peaks. Breathtaking and exciting.

We arrived in Tili and met with Pastor Si. We shared juicy shaddock, the fruit of moon festival, perfect tasting, not too sour and not too sweet. When we arrived at Ken Down's house, further up the mountain, many greeted us. The entire extended family on Ken's father's side slept outside on the concrete driveway of the three houses under an oversized tarp. Even though aftershocks rumbled under us throughout the night and wild dogs scavenged the area, I felt very loved and safe with the family around me.

Five a.m. came quickly. Church would be at nine o'clock. Ken Down and I were rehearsing an introduction in her native mountain language so I could use it in the church, when the second short but very intense earthquake shook us to the other side of the front porch. We were both very worried because her mother remained in the house but we didn't dare go in.

We waited patiently outside - minutes felt like hours. She had been in the bathroom as the ceiling came down around her. She came out a few minutes later scratched and shaken but okay. The house became too dangerous to use; the porch we stood on continued to break away, There were major cracks developing within the walls and the smell of gas filled the air.

It was very emotional for me to help pack Ken Down's belongings into boxes. They would move out of their home, but they had nowhere else to go. Together, Ken Down, her mother and I prayed to God to keep the family safe whatever might happen.

Meanwhile, her uncles and cousins had already begun to clear away a grassy area a few meters below their home to put up the new plastic lean-to. Bamboo trees were cut down and stripped for building material and the plastic from the current shelter would be re-used for the roof. Ken Down decided she should take me to the main part of town, near the church, where it would be safer. She would come back and continue to move her belongings.

The heat of the day began to soak our clothes as we motorcycled down towards the church. We met up with a huge roadblock. A landslide of about 15 or more feet of dirt, rocks and trees smothered the road, and the mountain looked precariously unstable. A few times we attempted to get enough courage to pass by it on foot,

constantly watching for movements in the rock and sand above. We finally struggled to the other side and walked another 10 minutes into town.

There we met Grace, Noon and John at an elementary school, which was turned into an injury shelter; a place where the helicopters would pick up the injured and drop off needed rescue items. As we sat, finally deciding that Noon and I would stay at the Catholic Church, a helicopter landed pushing huge amounts of dust and dirt into our sweat soaked skin. The air was already dusty and hot enough!

The Catholic Church was setting up temporary shelter. A large parking lot had been converted into an oversized tent with multiple sheets of striped plastic set up for cover. We felt very lucky as someone set up a tent just for us in the middle of the area. Another night with a bed of concrete awaited us but we were very thankful for a safe area anywhere.

Noon, Grace and I went to see if the Presbyterian Church needed our help, but most things were under control. It was not long before about 10 or 15 children were standing around me singing the alphabet and learning how to say nose, ears and eyes. I thought that with my limited Chinese, I could at least bring some joy and laughter to the children's lives during this terrible time. It was nice to see those little smiling faces.

Tremors from the aftershocks came as frequently as helicopters bringing more survival food and taking out more injured. Bits of garbage and dirt swirled in the heat of the day. We walked back to have our instant noodle soup dinner with Grace's family.

I could not believe the graciousness of Tili - everyone wanted to give us their limited food, water, shelter and safety. They didn't even know me but every person in the village seemed to be concerned for my wellbeing. I felt more and more like a burden every hour. My ability to communicate ideas or aid was non-existent.

The Catholic Church was very kind and gave us a tent as well as a care package, of ration foods, water, toothbrushes and towels. However without water, the toilets were totally unusable and many children were squatting at the gutters. What alarms me the most as I look back is that if someone didn't help the town clean up and sanitize the area, what would it be like in a month or two months?

That night we were kept awake by high winds threatening to collapse our tent. Most rationed breakfast food consisted of canned bean and rice cereal; other staples were instant noodles and powdered milk. In our ration package we were given oatmeal and milk powder, so that was what I was looking forward to eating. But we were blessed once again. In fact, I'm sure we were much luckier than any other family in the town. Grace's family had killed a mountain goat and caught some small fish in the river. This turned into a gourmet feast!!

That day Ken Down heard that some people were allowed to go out to Nan Tou

Pain

Pain
is but the kiss of Christ.
Tears,
are but its cleansing purge.
Faith,
is but its sole command.
Prayer,
is but its one response.

Roberta G. McLelland

by helicopter, so we rushed to pack our bags, hoping to make it for the ride. We were going to go swimming in the river to wash, but there was no time for that. We missed the first helicopter so we waited in the heat catching up on some of the sleep we lost the night before, stretching out on bags of rice and boxes of rations.

I felt sad leaving for what was like paradise when so many lives and homes were uprooted. There was no time to thank the families for their hospitality, all those who shared with me their love, their home and their food - hospitality I could never return. The gracious people of Tili had to live through these hardships daily - and for how long?

My thanks and prayers go out to all the families and to all my new friends. May we all send our prayers to their families to help them rebuild their lives and strengthen their faith even if they are unable to rebuild their homes.

Sonnet Based on Philippians 4:8

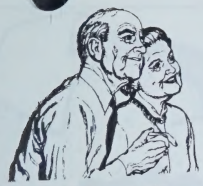
Think on these things the Holy Scriptures say:
Truth, purity, nobility and loveliness,
Then will your heart in peaceful pastures stray
Though all around reign chaos, strife and stress.

With purity then let me fill my thoughts;
A baby's smile, a joyful laugh, what more?
A snow-white field, a daughter's hug, and lots
Of praise to God for souls cleansed to the core.

Nobility, or fighting for a cause
Next comes to mind as thoughts start to unlock:
A parent's selfless labour without pause;
A pastor's tireless caring for his flock.

Loveliest of all, a young child's prayer I overheard.
And lastly, truth, embodied in God's mighty Word.

Adrienne Toews



The Seniors' Meeting

by Cecil E. Burridge

When Rita, a 69-year-old Christian widow came to me (her pastor), and asked me to officiate at her wedding, I agreed. She introduced me to 70-year-old Bruce, her intended. Bruce explained how the couple met and their romance blossomed.

Bruce's friends had invited him, a widower, to a seniors' meeting. "No way! I'm not going to that," he said. "It's boring."

Bruce went. He met Rita. They were mutually attracted. After a few 'get togethers', Bruce said to his new friend, "I'm lonely these days. Are you lonely too?" He got a YES and he asked, "Would you consider marrying again?"

He got another YES and, emboldened now, he said, "Would you consider marrying me?" "YES!"

On the day of the wedding, Bruce and I and the best man waited for the bride to come down the aisle. In his enthusiasm, Bruce said to me several times, "Boy, am I glad I went to that seniors' meeting!"

Their union thrived. So did their devotion to the Lord. They owned a motor home and traveled across much of Canada and the United States, worshipping in various churches wherever they went. At home, it was a delight for me to watch from the pulpit and see them joining with other believers in prayer and praise.

At the time of their marriage, being 'older', they said they would be content if the Lord gave them five years together. At the end of seven years Bruce came down with prostate cancer. After surgery, and a series of treatments, Bruce was told, "If you have no trouble for five years, you'll be fine."

Four years and eight months to the day, Bruce's old trouble resurfaced. Physicians did what they could for him. For several weeks it was a downhill struggle. As I stood by his hospital bed, the dying Christian told me, "Well, I'm ready. I know where I'm going. I've had a good, happy life with Rita. We've been everywhere. Been there. Done that. We asked the Lord for five years together and he gave us twelve."

Bruce is now in heaven where there is no marriage. Even so, one day when he sees his beloved Rita on the golden shore, he will surely go to meet her with an enthusiastic greeting, "Boy, am I glad I went to that seniors' meeting!"

Scripture:

"In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage" Matthew 22:30 RSV.

"If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin" 1 John 1:7 RSV.

Warm Rain

Our lives
Are like raindrops
Falling
In the shower
Of God's love.

Joanna M. Weston

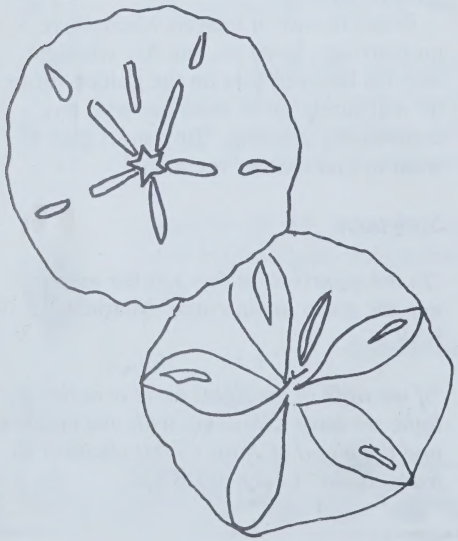
The Sand Dollar *or* Holy Ghost Shell

The **Sand Dollar** or **Holy Ghost Shell** is one of the most unusual specimens of marine life. The markings on the shell symbolize the birth, crucifixion and resurrection of Christ.

On the top side of the shell, an outline of the Easter lily is clearly seen. At the centre of the lily appears a five-pointed star representing the Star of Bethlehem. The five narrow openings are representative of the four nail holes and the spear wound made in the body of Christ during the crucifixion.

Reversing the shell you will easily recognize the outline of the Christmas poinsettia and also the bell. When broken, inside the shell are five little birds called the doves of peace. Some say they are the angels that sang to the shepherds the first Christmas morning.

- Thanks to Norma Tomlinson for sending this in.



CLOSE THE GAP between rich & poor

TEN DAYS for Global Justice
Education and **ACTION** program
1999-2000

TEN DAYS for Global Justice is sponsored by the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, the United Church of Canada, the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP), and the Anglican Church of Canada. Additional funding is received from the Canadian International Development Agency

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Illustrations by Stephen Lewis
Layout by NOMAD Design

John the Baptist

A Puzzle by Jim Phillips

E X F L E I R B A G
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A V Y R E B E I A E
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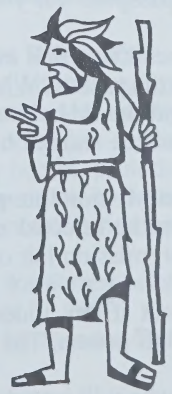


program...program...program...program...program...program.....

Margaret Robertson
Program Secretary

Using Missionary Letters as a Basis for Program

Letters from missionaries are a basic source for planning a program for your meeting. Here are some ways to develop a program around a letter/letters.

1. Choose the letter.

2. Decide how you are going to present the letter i. e. tell the story, read the letter, have a copy for each person to read…

* Find pictures of the missionary and his/her work to share with your group. (look in other issues of Glad Tidings, Presbyterian Record, Missionary profiles, 11 x 17 posters prepared by Education for Mission and available from The Book Room - 7 colour posters for $6)

* Using a map or globe, locate the country and/or area of the missionary.

* Develop a skit based on stories told in the letter.

* Plan an imaginary trip to the mission field - go on the "trip", interview the missionary at work, interview some local people, and plan how you will tell the story when you return. You may also want to talk about what you would need to take, and prepare a "passport" for your travel.

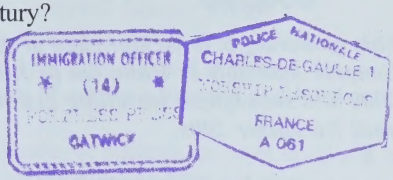
* Do research to find out where/how the WMS has been involved in missionary activities in the past. A WMS History Text is currently being written by Lois Klempa, Montreal and should be available by summer 2000. Meanwhile look in current books that are available and see how patterns of mission have changed or developed.

* Contact Mission Interpretation, Barbara Nawratil (church offices, ext 259) to see if and when the selected missionary will be available to your area for a speaking engagement, mission fair or another event that you might want to plan.

* Find out if any videos are available for this program. Check through your Regional Staff person, The Book Room or myself (Margaret Robertson, ext 319).

3. Decide who will introduce the program and how long you plan to spend on it.

4. Prepare questions for discussion. Make up your own or choose some from below:
a) What challenges does the missionary face? (cultural, religious, economic…)
b) What scripture(s) comes to mind from this letter?
c) What did you learn about mission in the 21st Century?



5. Plan for follow-up action.

* Plan for ways to support the person(s) studied - follow-up letters, email….

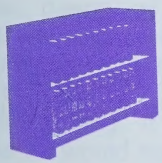
* Plan ways to be a prayer partner - list issues you realized, note issues that they named.

* If you would like to raise money for a special project, look in *Something Extra,* available from The Book Room to see if there is one connected to the geographic area or the type of ministry that your missionary does (i. e. education, environment, social issues…).

* Ask if you can share a 'moment for mission' during morning worship. Prepare the material and present it, find youth to present it, or work with children and/or youth to present it.

* Plan for real travel. There are a number of Mission Exposure Tours planned for 2000 and 2001. This is an excellent way to learn about our partner churches and our people in ministry there. Ask your minister about information that has circulated through PCPak or contact Sarah Hoag at Church Offices (1-800-619-7301, ext 249 or email: shoag@presbyterian.ca) for further information.

* Create a mission banner for one of our partner churches, a project of International Ministries. Banners can be made and submitted during 2000. Banners should be 3 to 4 feet long and can be submitted to International Ministries at 5 0 Wynford Dr., Toronto, ON M3C 1J7. These will be presented by visiting Canadians, possibly by the mission tours scheduled for this year.



What is the best kept secret of the Women's Missionary Society? The Christian Literature Fund! Actually we don't want it to be a secret. We want you to know that the Christian Literature Committee responds to requests for financial help in buying books, periodicals and other educational materials for many different organizations. Two examples of past recipients of funds are:

NIGERIA: Essien Ukpabio Theological College, Itu, for library books.

CANADA: North Peace River Territorial Presbytery, for Sunday School materials.

A Gathering of Quilts

This gathering is to be launched at the General Assembly in Hamilton in June 2000 and subsequent travelling exhibits until December 2001.

It is not too late for nimble fingers and creative minds to design and make pieces for the **Celebrate Millennium Quilt Exhibit**. As an individual you could create a smaller wall hanging or banner sized entry. Large or small groups can work on anything

What an exciting concept to contemplate quilting, portraying elements and symbols of Christian faith which have become an integral part of your spititual journey on a very personal or corporate level. Or, perhaps you are looking forward to our entry into the new millennium, and envisioning how Christianity will point the way and be a significant and vital force in the future.

Do you have congregational or individual quilts which were done previously and which are part of your treasured past? The quilting for the exhibit does not need to be new and some of the designs and creative skill from former days would be a most welcome addition and add a special dimension to the exhibit.

Brochures, entry form and information available from:

Sheila Kirkland - Co-ordinator of the project
431 Oakside Circle S.W.
Calgary AB T2V 4V3
Phone: (403) 281-6606
Fax: (403) 255-1302
E-mail: creativexpressions@hotmail.com
Website:
http://www.presbycan.ca/pccmill/quilt.htm

A Celebrate Banner pattern and Celebrate Note Cards also available, same address and phone number as above, website: http://www.presbycan.ca/pccmill/banner.htm

If Only Our Quilts Could Talk...

They would tell of:

~ prayers and wishes from past generations
~ hopes and dreams for generations yet to be
~ doubts and trusts
~ disappointments and happy memories
~ our faith journey and the faith journeys of others
~ threads that bind us to each other and to the abundant love of a gracious God.

Ten Commandments for Quilters

1. Thou shalt not do buttons.
2. Thou shalt sew ¼" seams.
3. Thou shalt leave no bolt unturned.
4. Thou shalt not rip - only unsew.
5. Thou shalt not envy thy neighbour's stitches.
6. Thou shalt never pass a quilt shop.
7. Thou shalt cook and clean but one day a week.
8. Never quilt tomorrow what you can quilt today.
9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's block.
10. Thou shalt not reveal funds spent on quilting suupplies.

- by Myrna Schott (reprinted from the 1999/2000 ELW Program Resource Collection p 49)

The Quilt

I gaze upon my Mother's quilt
With squares so neatly met
In corners, colours next at ease;
A work of art she's planned and built.

The shades of squares are dark and light
And all the rainbow tints between,
They vary as our thoughts and moods
That sweep through us, sad to delight.

Yellow and rose portray warm thoughts
And brown and blue our darker times;
All blocks are joined by tense of stitch,
All feeling joined by thread of life.

- From Elsie M. Curry, who found a copy of this poem in her mother's dresser, after she died suddenly at age 93. Her name was Etta van Nostrand. Etta made nine quilts, beginning at age 70. She also won "Best in Show" ribbons twice for her fine work.

"I"-Witness

God Listens

A friend of mine, a member of our church, whose husband is the centre of this little story, told me this little episode which she described as an answer to prayer.

Her husband had to be at the clinic at 7 o'clock in the morning. If he was late he would have to go to the back of a long line. She set the alarm for 6 a.m., but somehow the alarm didn't go off, and so she slept until 6:45. This gave them exactly 15 minutes to travel the distance between their home and the clinic.

She didn't say that she actually prayed at this point in time, but knowing my friend I am sure that she did as she contemplated the distance she would have to drive, and the number of traffic lights en route. If any one of them turned red as she approached that would delay the trip enough to put them behind time.

Hastily they gathered themselves together and started out. I feel sure that she must have been praying all the way as she approached lights that were red, which suddenly turned green as she reached them, and their trip to the clinic was uninterrupted all the way. They arrived in time for her husband's appointment with a couple of minutes to spare.

She is sure, and so am I, that God was listening. "After all" she said, "Isn't that what Alpha (our Bible study program) is all about?"

Kay Berry,
Richmond, BC

BOOKS

Order from:
The Book Room
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North York, ON M3C 1J7
416-441-1111 Ext. 239/240
E-mail: Bookroom@presbyterian.ca
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1-800-619-7301
Please do not send payment with your order. (An invoice including postage and applicable tax will be sent with your order.) Please include name and location of congregation. **Note: VISA and Mastercard now accepted.**

John Bell mania swept the country last November when this author of creative and innovative spoken and musical worship resources led workshops in various city centres. Here are some of this season's offerings from Bell and the rest of the Wild Goose Worship Group out of Scotland's Iona Community.

The Courage to Say No: Twenty-three songs for Lent and Easter by John L. Bell and Graham Maule. Book GG3844 $17.00. Tape GG4139 $16.25
Tracing the sometimes sure, sometimes faltering steps of Jesus and his followers through the entire season of Lent, to Easter Day and then beyond, these songs allow us to reflect on their progress, enter their experience and ultimately to make their confusion, doubt, joy and liberation our own. Includes a variety of styles, including African and Celtic traditions, many in four part harmony.

Stages on the Way: Worship resources for Lent, Holy Week and Easter by Wild Goose Worship Group. Softcover 237 pages. GG3106 $32.00
Included is a wealth of different types of worship resources: litanies, meditations, monologues, poems, prayers, readings, scripts and symbolic actions. Drawn from the work of the Wild Goose Worship Group, who are known for their innovative and highly participative style, *Stages on the Way* offers something different, sometimes startling, always deeply thoughtful and moving.

Jesus and Peter: Off-the record conversation by John L. Bell and Graham Maule. GG3676 $21.25
Originally released in three slim volumes under the title of "Eh, Jesus? Yes, Peter?" this terrific collection of twenty-four, one-minute dialogues is now available in one book. These humorous skits with a new point of view are ideal for use in worship, to introduce scripture in a study or to illustrate a point in a message.

And one for yourself...

Dandelions and Thistles: Biblical meditations from the Iona Community. Edited by Jan Sutch Pritchard. Large paperback GG4051 $21.25
How is the Word of God like a dandelion or a thistle?

It is pure gold, or royal purple, grows anywhere, and spreads like wildfire with seeds that blow on the wind of the Spirit. But aren't they weeds? What is a weed other than a flower somewhere you didn't expect?

This beautiful, illustrated book presents Bible stories in the form of radical and thought-provoking meditations, but are so wonderful and usable that you will

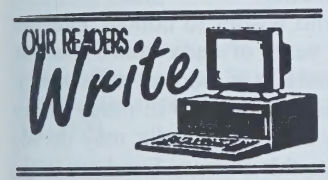
have to share them with others.

Finally from Nepal! The Book Room is carrying fish and cross symbol necklaces and earrings. Hand-made by Christians in Nepal, sales of these items benefit the Church there. Silver only, necklaces on 24" box chain. Necklaces $15.00, earrings $12.00 pair.

And a gift to give to say you are thinking of someone...

The Memorial Tear pewter pin is fashioned in the shape of a teardrop with the image of a rose inside, and is worn in memory of someone loved. The rose is a symbol of the love that never dies.

Consider starting a *Memorial Tear* gift program in your church as part of your outreach projects. GG4973 $8.50 ea. (discounts available for orders of 10 or more)



Dear L. June Stevenson:

You are doing a great job by providing really great reading in such a little magazine. I'm glad it was given to me as a gift from Rev. Betty Marsh last year, and now I am renewing the subscription.

Lee McKenna duCharme's article about using inclusive language is why I am writing. I can appreciate why this being pushed BUT God is not like human men, and should therefore remain as a male figure.

We have recently returned to the Presbyterian Church from the United. The United Church is big into inclusive language and this had a negative effect on the message being preached. I hope The Presbyterian Church doesn't follow the United Church.

Mrs. Diana Sinden, Beatty, SK

Dear June:

I have just received my November/December issue of Glad Tidings. As usual, it is full of good things, and as usual, I skimmed through it, noting as I went, the articles to which I would return to read more thoroughly. But I stopped abruptly at page 11 at Lee McKenna duCharme's article on "Out Loud Speech". That piece I read through - and then again - and again!

I commend Lee on her excellent presentation on the pressing need for inclusive language in all facets of society, and particularly in our churches. I also thank Glad Tidings for publishing this article.

To this day most of our children are still being taught the stories of the Bible and of our Christian heritage, in male dominated language. It would be hard for a young child, even today, to have any image of God other than an elderly, white haired and bearded man. I have long been an advocate of inclusive language, but I must thank Lee for presenting to me yet another co-relation between language, power and violence.

My remembrance in Montreal on this December 6th night will have a heightened awareness of the dangers of the semantic derogation of women in our society.

Druse Bryan, Montreal, QB

An email from the Editor's doctor pen pal in Cuba (see p 7 Nov/Dec '99 Glad Tidings)

Dear June:

Happy Christmas to you. Here we have no tradition of this date like North American people. We celebrate the 25th and mostly the new year with typical Cuban food: pork, gray rice, etc., and with the family together. In recent years we have recovered the 25th like a party date for us.

Your friend in Cuba.

Celebrates

Canadian Girls in Training is now 85 years young! Across Canada, exciting plans are well under way to celebrate this milestone.

Ontario CGIT is hosting a Jamboree on June 23-25, 2000 at the Farm Museum/Kelso Conservation Area in Milton. The theme: "New Adventures, New Friends" will be highlighted by exciting and fabulous activities: swing dancing, body art, games, boating, water sports and crafts. Girls and leaders will be attending from all over Ontario.

If you remember clapping your hands, stomping your feet and singing along with CGIT friends and the Ryders, then join us in Milton! For registration information, contact your own CGIT group or the Ontario CGIT Association, 310 Danforth Ave, Toronto, ON M4K 1N6. Phone/Fax: 416-465-5726. Email:dolsons@oxford.net.

World Day of Prayer
March 3, 2000

Talitha, cum!" Young Woman, Stand Up!
Prepared by Christian women of Indonesia

WICC
394 Bloor St W Ste 201
Toronto ON M5S 1X4
Tel: 416-929-5184
Fax: 416-929-4064
Email:wicc@wicc.org

Forward in Faith

Dr. Pauline Brown is a well known missionary of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, having served as a medical missionary to the Bhil people of India for almost fifty years.

On the occasion of Pauline receiving an Honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Knox College in May 1998, some of her friends in the Women's Missionary Society suggested that a Bursary Fund be set up in her name. This was approved by Council Executive and the first grant was sent to India in 1999.

This Fund is to be used to assist people who are training to serve in the health care system in India i.e. nurses, doctors, technicians, etc. A Bursary Committee, chaired by Pauline, has been set up in India, which will report annually to the Women's Missionary Society.

Anyone who wishes to honour Pauline for her long years of dedicated Christian service, not only as a medical missionary but in providing leadership in many areas of missionary outreach in India, may do so.

Donations to this Bursary Fund are welcomed. Cheques should be made payable to the *Women's Missionary Society*, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 50 Wynford Drive, North York, Ontario M3C 1J7, and marked for the Dr. Pauline Brown Bursary Fund. Receipts will be issued for donations of $10 or more.

We all join in commending Pauline for her dedicated and faithful ministry over the years. "Well done, good and faithful servant" (Matthew 25:23).

P. S. The receipts to the above Bursary Fund at date of writing total $10,971.49.

MISSION IN ACTION

Fernando Cascante
Central America

Rev. Dr. Fernando Cascante is on a part-time contract with International Ministries to do educational workshops with partners in Central America and Cuba. He has accepted a teaching appointment in the Presbyterian seminary in Richmond Virginia, but he will continue with the Presbyterian Church in Canada on a reduced basis.

Dr. Cascante reports on a workshop at Mam Centre, in San Juan Oscucalco, Quetzaltenango, Guatemala October 12-14, 1999.

It was not the first time I have had the privilege of working with women eager for some kind of theological training. But leading a workshop for these 23 Guatemalan women, representing four different presbyteries, members of the Fraternidad of Mayan Women (FMW), was very different.

Probably it was the most challenging and yet most exciting teaching/learning situation I have found myself in in all my life, because of the efforts we all had to make to overcome four barriers:

* centuries of oppression by males, both Spanish and from their own Mayan culture. (I was the first male ever working with the FMW.)
* the very low (or non-existent) literacy of all the participants.
* in fact, it was a challenge to find creative ways to have a language base for our conversation. In addition to Spanish, there were three other languages present. Two way communication had to be mediated by three different translators into three different Mayan languages.
* the wide range of ages (from 14 to 67), and varied leadership experience of the women.

We were helped to overcome these barriers because of their strong desire to become better leaders for their churches, and my strong desire to serve as a catalyst for reflection on the theme they had chosen: What is the church for? (Answer: For Proclamation, Education, Service, Communion, Adoration - PESCA!) We all felt God's spirit bonding us together as we tried to learn from each other during three full days.

I pray that somehow, the Spirit that guided Peter in his first sermon to speak in such a way that could be understood by people of different nationalities, was the Teacher that spoke to each one of us, in our own language, and according to our need.

Seeds were planted; the bearing of their fruit is in God's hands now.

Adele Halliday
Kenya

Adele Halliday is serving as a volunteer in Kenya on a one year shared appointment between the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Presbyterian Church of East Africa. The PCC funds come out of *Presbyterians Sharing*. Komothai school is a project of the women's guild of the Komothai Presbyterian Church.

Fall/Winter 1999 - *Hatujambo! Habari zenu?* Hello, and how are you all? Warm greetings from east Africa.

This is my second journey to the African continent. My first was in November, when I was blessed to attend the World Council of Churches Assembly in Zimbabwe, and to travel through Malawi. As I lived in south central Africa for that short time, it only confirmed my desire and call to return to this part of the world for a longer period.

Now I find myself in east Africa in a country which borders the equator, and living as a resident with people to share their lives, to teach and be taught, and to share a message of love.

Yesterday I was north of the capital Nairobi and met some laughing children playing. They touched my braided curly hair in wonder and amazement, and expressed their shocked delight that there was such a thing as a Black person living in North America! I told them that my nationality is Canadian.

"How did your skin get so dark?", I was asked at one point during these past weeks. I realized more than ever that the impression that some have of North America is one where people are living as richly as they do on television sitcoms and in many Hollywood movies. Yet I am so keenly aware that our views of Africa are also often *mis*-impressions or that they are localized impressions of a specific area that spread to include and encompass the entire continent.

Too often, when we think of Africa, we think of this huge and diverse continent as a uniform nation with one race. ...we think of people running about with no clothes, with distended bellies and flies around their eyes. ...we think of witch doctors, traditional healers, mud huts and tribal warriors. This is, after all, the impression that we have been given

- Adele Halliday

of this continent, just as the people of Africa are given a misimpression of North America. And, while what I have mentioned above is a portion of African life, it is certainly not the entire picture. This is not to say that Kenya isn't poor or that it doesn't have some of the above facets. But, those facets are certainly not all of what Africa or Kenya is about just as life in Beverly Hills is not what all of North America is about.

I wrote in September, after being in one of the poorer slum areas of Nairobi:

Over my lifetime, in different situations and in different contexts, I have seen poverty. I have seen people who have very few material possessions and who live very simply. Today someone commented that they weren't really as affected by all of the poverty they saw that day because they had previous exposure to poverty on a mission trip. But I didn't feel that way.

While I can identify with that to a certain extent, I cannot let my heart become hardened to the point where I would view everyone in the same light and think that a poor person is a poor person is a poor person. Because of the fact that each of us is a child of God, we are unique creatures, and are all blessings to this earth. And, too many children around the world

are not given a chance to live as they might because of their circumstances or whatever.

This makes me alternatively angry and sad. Each child continues to affect me, because each person is an individual who shouldn't have to live that way. I hope that I never become numb to poverty and the inequities of life here on earth, I really pray that I may never stop caring about the "least of these". For when I do, I would have lost my focus, I would have forgotten my calling, and I would have forgotten the uniqueness of each human creature. May I never forget that we are all children of God.

Blessings and love as always.

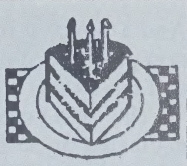
Adele's second epistle (email) follows:

Mui ega! (pronounced 'more-ee egg-ah') Today I bring you greetings in Kikuyu. They say that about 65% of Kenyans are Kikuyu, and I am living in the heart of Kikuyu country; and working primarily with the ethnic group that speaks the language of the same name. So, I am learning yet another language and am immersed in another culture.

My adjustment culturally and emotionally has been small, and the community and villagers have wholly embraced me. I live about 40 kilometers north of the capital city Nairobi, but despite the short geographic distance, my village life is very rural. I moved to the village on October 1st, after being in Nairobi for a period of orientation.

The area I live in is called Komothai, and I am working at the Komothai School for the Mentally Handicapped. It is a boarding school, and children with various mental challenges come here to learn, work and play. Right now, the school is full to capacity with 35 students.

OVERSEAS STAFF BIRTHDAYS



May

1- Jake Vanderzweerde, India
5- Yasmani Samuel Villalonga, Nicaragua
15 - Robert Young, Malawi
19 - Luke Inglis, Malawi
23 - Bruce Hickling, Malawi
26 - Pauline Brown, India
27 - David Onuoha, Nigeria

June

10 - Joy Randall, Taiwan
15 - Wendy Lessard-Clouston, Japan
20 - Clarence McMullen, India
22 - Rebecca Leona Onuoha, Nigeria
23 - Nathanael Taylor Allison, Cameroon
24 - Mark Young, Malawi
25 - Christopher Jorna, Guyana
26 - Miriam Barrie, Malawi
26 - Mark Gordon, Mozambique

It is amazing that I am here as a partnership between three churches in three countries! It was hard to make sure that my unique gifts and talents would be effectively used in a project of the Presbyterian Church, and I am doing well.

I am happy, well and quite joyful. I love it here in the village, in the countryside with the fresh air and the breezes. Life is simple, and the people are warm and friendly.

The children of the school with all of their challenges are a continual joy and blessing to me. They are all so very special, and already very dear to me. Each one has found a special spot in my heart very quickly. They make me laugh, and they make me cry. My heart aches for them because they so desperately need to be loved and to know that they are loved.

And I do love them - and so they have accepted me quickly as their caregiver and teacher.

The first week I was there, I really dedicated myself to knowing and understanding each and every child - and some are easier to understand than others. I concentrated on knowing each child's name (both their given name and their Kikuyu name) and discerning the very particular challenges that the children face. Many face multiple challenges, and it is hard work at times but they are so very teachable and so much fun to be around.

Many people in the community view mentally challenged children as a curse - and do not understand them. Culturally, people wonder if they as parents or a family have done something wrong to deserve such a child. It is sometimes viewed as a sort of divine punishment that their children are not 'normal'. Many such children end up being hidden away, ignored or neglected.

By the time some of the children become students at the Komothai Special School, some cannot walk, talk, go to the toilet or feed themselves, even some that are 10 years old. Because of this, when children first arrive, their education is very basic. We begin by teaching the children to take care of themselves and later on, teaching academics.

My role at the school is primarily as a teacher. I work with a small class to do English, math, arts and crafts, physical education, perceptual training, and other things. This is not nearly as easy as it sounds! The children are all at very different levels, and teaching can be draining and very challenging. The school day is long, and there are so many cultural differences that I am almost always in a state of learning.

The children only speak some English and I only speak some Kikuyu, and all of us are learning Kiswahili. So, for the second time in a year, I find myself teaching in a language that is not my mother tongue. I am still figuring out how the school system runs and how things work.

These children are truly 'the least of these'. They are poor, they are often not loved, and they are misunderstood. My heart breaks for them, and I hug them and play with them all the time. They cling to my touch, and deliberately seek out my attention and love. Sometimes I cry for them at night, because they are so in need. I can only hope and pray that one day they will realize that they are truly children of God, and that they are wonderful creations and blessings to the earth.

It is difficult for me to describe my feelings of absolute contentment at Komothai. I know with all certainty that God has brought me to the right place at the right time, and I am truly at peace.

I was really challenged by a sermon that was read to me the other day: "Here are people in need. Here, likewise is the presence of God to meet those needs. Will you be God's person to help minister to those needs? Will you follow the call of Christ confidently, joyfully, enthusiastically; into whatever service God has for you? Will you, as the wonderful hymn says, 'Follow, not without fears?' Will you?"

Please feel free to write - your letters and messages lift my heart and bring me joy.

Adele

Adele can be reach by email at: adele@africana.co. Or by regular letter mail: Adele Halliday. Komothai Special School, P. O. Box 253, Ngewa, Kenya, Africa. Watch for more of her adventures in the next issue.

Heather Jones
Malawi

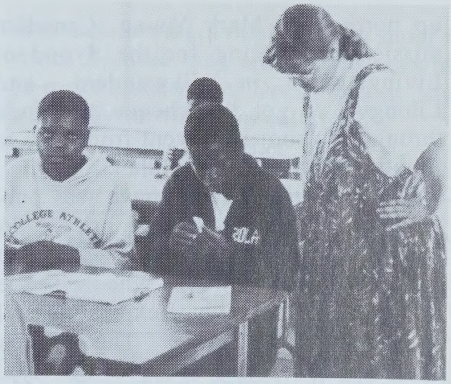
My fingers are developing some calluses. I've been doing a lot of stitching lately. My voice is a little bit hoarse, too. That's from trying to shout over the excited voices of schoolgirls. I've been teaching cross-stitching.

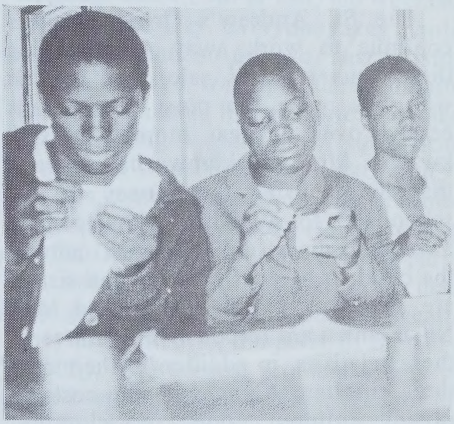
The teaching actually started soon after I arrived here in Malawi, as some of the women who lived in the Synod compound saw me doing my needlework. They were anxious to learn a new craft. This initial interest has developed into a small-scale business: some would call it a "cottage industry", even though there is no cottage to work in. We call ourselves the "St. Andrew's Cross Stitchers".

The first pattern that the neighbourhood women worked on was a souvenir for the Church of Central Africa (CCAP) Synod of Livingstonia's Silver Jubilee meeting in November of 1998. We did eventually sell all the items made, but it took some time. Malawians don't have much disposable income for buying decorative souvenirs.

It took a bit of discussion, but eventually the women acknowledged that the people in Malawi with money to spend are not Malawians, but visitors and tourists. So, we developed a pattern that shows a map of Malawi, with the countrys'motto: "Malawi: The Warm Heart of Africa". These pictures fit easily into frames made by local wood carvers. The framed picture is a lovely souvenir that is easily slid into a backpack, and doesn't weigh too much for luggage-laden travelers.

The arrangement for the "business" is





- Heather Jones, above right, with St. Andrew's Cross Stitchers.

that the pictures sell for 100 Malawi kwacha (about $3 Cdn) unframed, or 200 Malawi kwacha framed. The person who makes the picture earns 50 kwacha. St. Andrew's Church, where we all attend worship, gets 25 kwacha. Twenty-five kwacha go into the fund to cover the expenses of the materials. The Aida cloth, which makes cross-stitch easy to do, is available in Blantyre, in the south of Malawi. The embroidery thread is available in Lilongwe. So, collecting materials is possible, but not particularly easy. The last batch of cloth was purchased for us by Linda Inglis, Canadian missionary serving in Blantyre, and sent

up north with Mark Young, Canadian missionary working for the Synod of Livingstonia in Ekwendeni and Lilongwe. I got the cheque to Linda through a visitor who went from here to Blantyre on his tour of Malawi.

The material that we have was purchased at a pre-devaluation price. So far, the 25 kwacha has been enough to cover the costs. However, when we have to buy our next supply, I expect we will have to raise our prices. The kwacha devalued in August of 1998 by 48%. Since then, costs for imported items have generally been raised by about 60%.

The St. Andrew's Cross-Stitchers continue to work away at producing these souvenirs for sale. The woman who has made the most articles has earned, over the year, more than 1000 kwacha. Mrs. Nthakomwa has told me that she is using this money to pay school fees for a nephew whose parents have both died. (In Malawian culture, the children of your brothers and sisters are also your children.) Mr. and Mrs. Nthakomwa are responsible for three of these relatives, in addition to their own three children. Along with the costs of raising children, food, and clothing, there are fees for all levels of education above primary school. In this situation, every little bit helps.

In the past few weeks, the cross-stitching activities have broadened. I was approached by the CCAP primary boarding school for girls. Because of the rising cost of living here, they have been unable to balance their budget for the past number of months. I agreed to teach some of the senior girls to do cross-stitching as a fund-raising activity for the school. Their school is located on the shore of Lake Malawi, where there is a high concentration of resorts and lodges. We hope that some of these resorts will sell these souvenirs in their shops.

A further request came from one of the secondary schools that I visit as chaplain. Robert Laws Secondary School will celebrate its Silver Jubilee. Remembering the crests made for the Synod Jubilee celebration, it was decided that school crests would be popular with the former students who will gather to celebrate the day. So, further cross-stitch classes have been happening.

The students in the classes who have gathered to learn this new skill have all been very excited. Materials for teaching sewing are difficult to come by in schools. Sewing has been taken out of the curriculum for primary school students because there are no materials. Secondary school students practise stitches on small scraps of waste material.

There is little chance for students to sew anything that they can show as a finished product. They have seen the items that they will produce, and they are anxious to have their own to display. Some of the girls even tried to miss their other classes in order to continue their sewing!

In these classes, it has been difficult for me to watch the two girls who are unable to do the work. I believe that the problem is that their eyesight is so poor that they cannot see the small holes in the material. At the secondary school, I was able to encourage the home economics teacher to send a girl to have her eyes tested at the hospital that is in the same community (the school and the hospital are both run by the CCAP). The teacher was concerned that the girl would have difficulty finding the money to pay for the glasses. I was able to assure her that if it is a problem for the family, I will find some help for her.

At Bandawe, where the Primary

Prayer Requests

Central America

1. Pray that women in the Presbyterian Church of Guatemala may overcome the barriers that face them.
2. Pray for the ministry of Fernando Cascante in his role as workshop leader.

Kenya

1. Pray for the continued good health, energy and safety of Adele Halliday.
2. Pray for the people and community of Komthai, particulary the children so that they realize they are loved and are true blessings.
3. Pray that the community will begin to accept and embrace those who are different.
3. Pray for strength for the women of Kenya, who continue to bear the burdens of society.

Malawi

1. Pray for the St. Andrew's Cross Stitchers that their new skills may benefit themselves, their families and their community.

School is located, there is no nearby hospital of any kind. The closest medical facility is a government hospital one hour away. Eye testing and eyeglasses are not available at government hospitals. Arrangements to help this student are not so easy to make.

Despite the occasional challenges, I have been inspired by the interest and diligence of my "students". I have been able to share a skill, and I have made friends. Now, that the girls have settled into their sewing, I don't have to shout so much because they are too busy sewing to make much noise! Does anybody have a remedy for fingertip calluses?

Heather

The Pattersons
Central America

We finally get a day off. It has been a busy month. Two trips to El Salvador, language study...but at last, the weekend of All Saints Day. Everyone takes a holiday here. And so did we. Just outside Quetzaltenango, way up in the mountains are these amazing hot volcanic pools fed by a boiling waterfall of sulfur/iron water, and scenery beyond description.

This coming week should be extremely interesting. November 7th is election day in Guatemala. The incumbent party has been much more progressive than any government for the past 40 years. They are, however, the party of the very wealthy. The biggest problem seems to have been that they have managed to sell off the most valuable resources of the country (the phone system and the power system) to themselves, and at a very low price.

This has angered the voters, to the point that they are ready to opt for another party. Unfortunately, the party that seems to be leading in the polls right now is the same group that brought Guatemala the wholesale rape and pillage policies of the 1980's, when hundreds of thousands of native persons were massacred here by the military. Their appeal seems to be that they promise to end the wave of crime that has become part of Guatemala's life. Time will tell.

Within three weeks (November 19th) we will finish our language training for now. Probably, Brenda will return sometime in the Spring for a further couple of weeks. By November 19 we figure she will have reached a saturation point.

We will be living in Santa Ana. Arrangements have been completed to rent a three-bedroom house, complete with office, garage, and garden. Room for one and all. Come and see.

Jim has met twice with various groups of the Baptist Federation of El Salvador. The work will be challenging. The congregations in the Western third of the country are poor in material resources, although rich in faith and in enthusiasm. They are a diverse lot, but generally all seem to be headed toward community ministry in one form or another. The pastors need some care and attention. That will be my first priority.

Brenda has a somewhat better picture of what will occupy her time in Santa Ana and area. Her artistic talents seem to be in demand. El Refugio church has a sewing school which needs some animation, and some raw materials such as fabric. Judging from the reaction in Guatemala, her bread-making skills will be more than useful. There also is the Movimiento Feminil de Febes (sort of a WMS) which needs some organizing.

Since our last epistle, we have heard from Elizabeth and her boyfriend, Taisto Maki, that they are engaged, and that they plan to marry when we return to Canada mid point in our term (somewhere around Christmas 2001). We welcome Taisto into our family. God has blessed our family with much diversity.

Don't forget to email when you can. You can always find us at: bagpipe@web.net.

Que el Dios de los pobres les bendiga, y les de mucha sabiduria, en el nombre de Jesus, la sabiduria de Dios mismo.

Jim & Brenda

- Brenda, left, hard at work with Spanish studies. Right: Brenda with Otoniel, Ruth and Alex, FEBES leaders.

Seniors on the Go

Living out of Cans, Boxes and Bags

by Norma Tomlinson

My Friend the Can

New Tastes:
Mix tomato soup and vegetable soup
Mix tomato soup and chicken noodle soup
Mix tomato soup and leftover macaroni or noodles
Mix cream of green pea soup and one can drained green peas
Add ½ cup milk to a can of creamed corn

For Creamed Peas on Toast
In saucepan put one can green peas (leave the liquid there for taste).
Add ½ can milk to which 1 tbsp corn starch has been added and a tsp or so of butter.
Salt and pepper to taste.
Simmer until it is as thick as you like it. Place on toast.

Soup and Meat Patties
When you fry up a meat patty or two, make a sauce to put on it and use on a kaiser or hamburger bun, or on potato, spaghetti or rice.

Suggestions:
Beef patty - Campbells New Italian Tomato Soup with basil and oregano
Beef patty/ground turkey, chicken or pork with cream of mushroom/cream of chicken/cream of celery soup.

How to: after you cook your meat patty(ies) or two, set meat aside to stay warm. Add one or two tbsps of water to the pan. Let it pick up the brown bits for flavour. Add the soup and some black pepper. Bring to a boil, then simmer for a couple of minutes. Add your meat patty(ies) again. Use everything to top a big bun, rice or whatever you like!

A pound of meat makes four patties or 8 to 10 small ones, with leftovers for another meal.

P.S. I find Campbells Soups very good for flavour but seem very salty. So taste your dish before adding more salt.

Daffodils

by Gladys Nolan

During a time of stress, with nerves on edge over talk of war in Canada, the Kosovo situation, and other situations that had bugged me recently, I sat down wearily to eat lunch.

As I glanced at the lovely daffodils gracing my kitchen table I was struck by the perfect form of the blossom. Six petals around the edge of the frilly center which holds the stamen protectively, completes the miracle of this lovely gem of Nature's bounty.

Only God could have created such beauty. I prayed for peace in wonderful world, and for peace in my own heart. Amen

"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." **2 Corinthians 9:7**

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Choose this day whom you will serve. . .We will serve the Lord

Joshua 24:14 (NRSV)

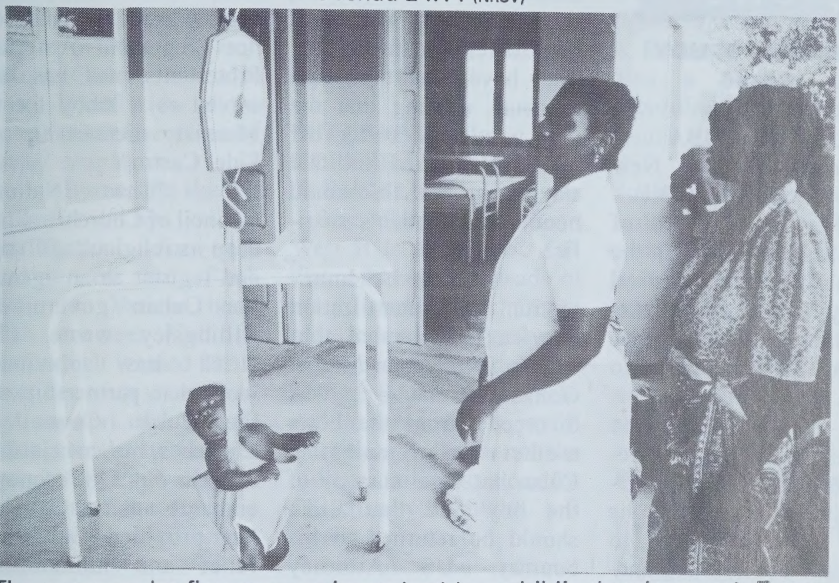

Photo by Karen Plater, PWS&D

The years under five are very important to a child's development. Every year millions of children-under-five die from preventable causes—malnutrition, diarrhea and vaccine-preventable diseases. That's why PWS&D supports primary health care programs in Africa, India and Central America. In these programs mothers are encouraged to breast feed. Children's weight and height are carefully monitored and recorded to ensure they are growing properly. Families learn how to ensure everyone is getting enough proteins, minerals and vitamins in their diet. Parents are taught how immunization can protect their children from deadly diseases and how proper sanitation can prevent diarrhea.

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NEWS

MISSION STUDY NEWS

NCC SUPPORTS RETURN TO CUBA

- Chris Herlinger, New York, 18 January (ENI) - The National Council of Churches, USA (NCC), the nation's biggest ecumenical agency, has continued mediation efforts to return six-year-old Elian Gonzalez to Cuba.

Robert Edgar, the NCC's new general secretary, told ENI in an interview on 15 January that the NCC supported plans to bring the boy's two grandmothers from Cuba to Miami, and then return them to Cuba with the boy.

The plan involving the grandmothers was the latest in a contentious immigration case that has become an international incident, enflaming passions and sparking massive protests in the US and Cuba.

For some conservatives the six-year-old boy's predicament has become a symbol of the conflict between democracy and dictatorship. The boy was rescued last November off the Florida coast after he survived an illegal trip from Cuba (his mother, stepfather and other Cubans perished at sea.

Since his rescue, Elian has lived with relatives in Miami who want him to remain in the US. They have taken their case to court, arguing that the boy would be better off here than in Cuba, and that staying in the US would honour his mother's sacrifice.

But the US Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) ruled that Elian's father, Juan Miguel Gonzalez, who was divorced from the boy's mother and remains in Cuba, has legal custody of the boy and that Elian should be returned to his country. US Attorney General Reno supported the INS repatriation order, though she allowed the relatives in Florida time to contest the INS ruling in the federal court.

Earlier this month, Joan Brown Campbell, Edgar's predecessor as NCC general secretary, and Oscar Bolioli, who heads the NCC Latin America and Caribbean office, traveled to Cuba and met Elian's father and family at the invitation of the Cuban Council of Churches. They concluded that Elian's father was acting in good faith and that the Cuban government was not exerting pressure on him.

At least one commentator has publicly criticized the NCC over the issue. Kenneth Lloyd Billingsley said the NCC did not "represent American Protestants, and has long served as a lobby for the Marxist dictatorship of Fidel Castro".

"The National Council of Churches should drop its religious affiliation and register as an agent of the Cuban government" Billingsley wrote. (The NCC has previously worked in partnership with the Cuban Council of Churches, has criticized the 40-year-old US economic embargo against Cuba and has provided Cuba with relief and humanitarian assistance.)

UK NUN RESIGNS AFTER VATICAN REPRIMAND

- Cedric Pulford, London, 14 January (ENI) - A prominent Roman Catholic nun in Britain has resigned from her order, blaming Vatican authorities for trying to force her into line over the issues of women priests and contraception.

Lavinia Byrne, aged 52, is a well-known broadcaster in Britain and, since 1964, a member of the highly respected order of nuns, Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary (IBVM) which she joined at the age of 17. She is also the author of seven books,

including Woman at the Altar, in which she argued for the ordination of women priests in the Roman Catholic Church. She also takes a liberal view of the practice of contraception by married couples.

Byrne said she felt "bullied" by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), the Vatican body which oversees Catholic belief, which wanted her to retract her views and publicly support the Pope's teaching on the two issues. Pope John Paul II has declared that the Catholic Church will never ordain women priests.

She said in a statement: "I am deeply sad to have to leave a religious congregation which has a splendid record of championing the place of women in the church."

"What I'm concerned about now is not so much the debate about the ordination of women, because if it's God's will it's going to happen anyway. My concern is the way people in the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith deal with dissenters."

Byrne, the newspaper reported, felt the fate of Catholic women was to be "an invisible sub-species".

"The lot of most Catholic women is to be deeply devout, to pray, to be there in church on Sunday and not to count. The way that manifests itself is that only men can represent Christ."

MILLENNIUM CELEBRATIONS IN JERUSALEM

- Ross Dunn, Bethlehem, West B In an historic display of unity, the heads of the 13 traditional churches of Jerusalem gathered together in Bethlehem's Manger Square at the weekend to pray for a joyful Christmas and to launch the millennium celebrations for Christianity's 2000th anniversary.

At the official launch patriarchs, archbishops and other church heads and officials from the Holy Land were joined by church representatives - Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox - from around the world and by thousands of pilgrims.

Palestinians, some of them dressed in biblical costumes, danced behind marching bands in the shadow of the Church of the Nativity, built over the spot where Jesus is believed to have been born.

BLANTYRE TO ORDAIN WOMEN

Blantyre Synod of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian in Malawi has elected a new General Secretary. It is Reverend Daniel Gunya, 1 35-year - old progressive and popular figure. The new moderator is Reverend Tom Maseya, also a popular choice according to a reliable source.

On the last day of Synod, there was a motion and agreement to ordain women to Word and Sacraments. The four women theological graduates who already qualify are now free to seek licensing and then, after a year, ordination.

Pneumonia Prevention Vests

Dr. Debora Tezlo, Medical Superintendent at Jobat Christian Hospital, India has written a letter of thanks to International Ministries of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Four parcels were received of baby clothes for the poor and needy children of Jobat and Mendha. "The warm baby clothes are very pretty and nice," she said.

"This knitting project arose out of a request from Miriam Barrie, a volunteer who worked at Naming'azi Demonstration Farm, and recently at Lusangazi in Malawi.", says Dr. Marjorie Ross, Secretary for International Ministries. The "pneumonia prevention" vests were intended for premature babies at Mulanje Hospital. The response to this project has been tremendous from WMS groups across the country. Because the industrious knitters were producing vests, afghans and bonnets, it was decided to ship to other countries were there was also a need."

IN THE SOCIETY

PRESBYTERIAL

Forward in Christ's Service was the theme for **East Toronto** Presbyterial Fall Rally in Glenview Church, Toronto on October 23, 1999.

Convenor Shirley Mason welcomed everyone and Dr. R. Fourney brought greetings from the Session of Glenview.

Devotions were led by Jan Fourney and Helen Oakes.

Dr. Marjorie Ross of International Ministries shared some of her vision for mission in the year 2000 and beyond. She also spoke to the different motives that affect our service in mission.

Prayers were asked for Barbara Woodruff and Agnes Hislop. General courtesies were given by Audrey Nettleton.

Lindsay Presbyterial Fall Meeting was hosted by Knox Presbyterian Women, Bobcaygeon, ON, September 29, 1999. Mary Ann Schell extended a warm welcome. Lindsay WMS conducted the worship service.

Grace Jess presided and minutes of the Fall Meeting 1998 and treasurer's report were presented and approved.

Synodical Committee for 2001 and executive secretaries gave reports. Fanning the Flames program was explained by Eleanor Grant. A report on a workshop for the mission study on Cuba was given by Alyth Mutart. Joan Smith led a thought provoking workshop on "Change".

Florence Fennell extended courtesies to all who participated.

LOCAL

A special event took place at a Sunday morning service in **St. David's Church, Kelowna**, BC. A beautiful banner was given to the **Ada Adams** WMS Group in memory of Dr. John and Bernice Adams, members of St. David's for many years, by their daughter Karen Rempel of Calgary, AB.

Bernice was a long time treasurer of the Ada Adams Group and John was a brother of Ada Adams for whom the group was

named. The banner was designed and made by two members of our group, Helen Dobie and Edna Scott, shown bottom page 44 with Karen at the banner dedication. The banner features the crest of the WMS. The flowers were placed in the church by the WMS.

During 1999, the members of **Morewood** WMS enjoyed three special meetings. At the June meeting, Rev. & Mrs. Bert DeBruijn gave an inspiring presentation on their Asian tour to India, Indonesia and Singapore. The most memorable part of their trip was the time they spent in Mizoram, an Indian province near the border of Myanmar (formerly Burma).

Just over one hundred years ago, the people of this mountainous province were headhunters. Today, almost 100% of the population are dedicated practising Christians who are Presbyterians. The Good News of Jesus Christ was brought to them by Presbyterian and Baptist missionaries from the United Kingdom.

Although the people are poor, they support their Christian work and each other by setting aside a handful of rice at each meal, plus a few sticks of wood. Their offering is sold by the churches to support their orphanages, schools, churches, and so on. Their musical talents are exceptional and all their church services are enriched by beautiful singing.

The Mizzos tour North America nearly every year with either a choir or a quartette. The singers are accompanied by an evangelist who speaks about their faith. The DeBruijn's videos, slides, photos and artifacts gave more insight into Mizoram lifestyle.

In September Brockville Presbyterial president, Henny Donkersteeg and Fran Adams attended our regular meeting. It was a pleasure to have these visitors.

On Sunday October 3, during regular worship, one of our members, and long time supporter, Irene Stewart was presented with an honourary membership and pin (below left). Irene has taught Sunday School and was one of the first women elders of the congregation. At present she is Brockville Presbyterial Glad Tidings secretary.

Lisbeth Duncan, president of **Varsity Acres** Presbyterian Church, **Calgary, AB** is shown below right receiving an Honorary Membership from Synodical President Marg Befus. Lisbeth is the

Moderator of the Synod of Alberta and the Northwest.

The **Caintown** Auxiliary of **St. Paul's** WMS lost a valued member with the passing on November 17, 1999 of **Dorothy Mary Turner**.

Dorothy was an elder of Caintown Church and President of the WMS for 32 years. She always attended Brockville Presbyterial meetings and rallies as her health permitted.

Dorothy's quiet and friendly manner endeared her to the many friends and relatives who mourn her passing.

- Effie Mcleish

A faithful member of Lindsay WMS passed away October 31, 1999, **Effie McLeish**. She had celebrated her 100th birthday on September 24.

Effie was born on a farm near Glenarm and spent her childhood there. In an age when women did not pursue careers, Effie went to Peterborough Teachers College where she met her future husband. They lived in Ottawa and Hamilton and raised two girls, Dorothy and Norma.

Effie was a faithful member of St. Andrew's WMS for many years. She was a wonderful Christian woman who lived her faith and was dearly loved by all who knew her.

CIRCULATION NEWS

Katherine Allen
Circulation Manager

Each year a number of copies of the magazine are returned to the office by the Post Office. Reasons for magazines being returned include "moved" or "incomplete address". Please check the label on your magazine to make sure your mailing address is correct, and notify us immediately if there is a change in your address.

If you are moving, please notify us at least six weeks before. In each instance, please include a label from your copy of the Glad Tidings magazine. Also, notify the Glad Tidings secretary/contact person for your congregation so that she can make this change in her files.

For 1999 it cost us $22.50 for magazines returned to the office. This does not include the postage for writing to the Glad Tidings secretary to follow up on what the new address is.

Canada Post is working on ways to develop a more efficient and effective way to handle redirected mail. When a person moves, the mail will be redirected to a local mail delivery facility instead of to one of the ten regional facilities. Canada Post hopes that this will improve postal service to customers.

Thank You

Thanks to all the publicity secretaries who have recently sent in briefer and more succinct news litems. Not having to edit and/or condense these saves a lot of time and effort for the editor.

New WMS Presbyterial Formed

On November 7, 1999, the **Han-Ca West Presbyterial WMS** was officially formed in Vancouver Korean Church. The first President is Mrs. Connie Yoo. The service was conducted in Korean.

Attending were Barbara Marshal, president of Westminster Presbyterial, and Betty Siverns, (in place of Elizabeth McLagan, BC Synodical president who was away). They brought greetings and welcome from presbyterial and synodical, with the help of a translator.

Barbara also presented Mrs. Yoo with an envelope of material relating to WMS which included one of the new pewter pins. The service was followed by a social time and lunch. As is their custom, several individuals and groups were induced to entertain with songs. A very enjoyable time was had.

Gateway Community Church in Flemingdon Park requires an Organist/Choir Director.

The small Choir, the Congregation, and the Minister are deeply committed to musical ministry and await the musician who will share our vision for this ministry in a multicultured church and community. Conn two-manual organ with full pedalboard.

Resumé to:
Beth Clelland,
Music Vacancy Committee,
Gateway Community Church,
150 Gateway Blvd.,
North York, ON, M3C 3E2.

For information phone 416-444-6762.

IN REMEMBRANCE

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(died in Owen Sound)
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St. Andrew's, Brampton

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St. Paul's, Brockville, ON

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St. Lukes-Knox, Finch, ON

Mrs. Catherine Webster
Knox, Fingal, ON

Elsie Burns
St. Andrew's, Geraldton, ON

Jean Turner
Duff, Largie, ON

Effie McLeish
St. Andrew's, Lindsay, ON

Mrs. Bertha Ingram
Maple, ON

Mrs. Maude Farlinger
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Isobell McTavish
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Glad Tidings

May /June 2000

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Glad Tidings

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GLAD TIDINGS reports on aspects of the Women's Missionary Society on all levels.

GLAD TIDINGS challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally and internationally.

GLAD TIDINGS through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired and motivated to action.

GLAD TIDINGS provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS (WD) or by the Editor.

Written in Love

L. June Stevenson, Editor

May 2000

I Know You...

"Bring it in the next time", the clerk at the corner store said when I was four cents short on my order. "I know you."

"I know you...." What lovely words to hear. I just moved to this area six months ago, yet already I am beginning to be known.

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you...", the Lord said to the prophet Jeremiah (1:5). Awesome! God who knows our every thought, *knew* us even before we were conceived. The psalmist says: "In your book were written all the days that were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed." (Psalm 139:16)

In fact, God has *always* known us. And if God was there in the beginning, then we have always been here. Heavy duty!

The psalmist explores this thought in depth. "O Lord, you have searched me and known me...." Everything the psalmist has ever done or thought is known to God. Intimidating, perhaps or maybe more of a challenge, a calling to respond. It is not so much that we are under scrutiny, but that we are invited to be actively involved in God's work. If we are open to God's presence in our lives, and obedient to God's direction, we can be channels for the doing of God's will on earth, both in our lives and in the lives of others.

As I walk about, seeing the flowers spring up, and the buds burst out on the trees, I am beginning to feel at home in my new neighbourhood. It's a comfortable feeling. Just as I feel when I acknowledge God's presence in my life. It's like a warm 'fuzzy', knowing that I, too, am part of the created order.

How long, O Lord, before we accept the invitation to be your people? How long, O Lord, before we "know" ourselves, and in knowing ourselves, have a glimpse of your awesome magnitude. "How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! I try to count them - they are more than the sand; I come to the end - I am still with you." (Psalm 139:17, 18)

June

Write and tell us what you think:

A challenge for you: The theme for Council 2000 is Rediscovering Your Inner Child (correction). Write and tell us, as briefly as possible (500 words or less), what you think Jesus meant when he said in Matthew 18: 3, that we must become like children in order to enter the kingdom of heaven. What does this mean to you?

Send your responses in before May 1 and I will take them to the Council meeting to add to our discussions. Material on the subject will be published with the Council report.

Thanks to those who have already responded!

Coming Away

by Charlotte Brown

WMS Executive Secretary

You're going on a silent retreat? For eight days? You must be crazy. How can you go that many days without talking? Why would you want to do that when you live alone? These are questions posed to me by friends and colleagues when I casually mention my upcoming plans. It is an opportunity 'to come away ... and rest awhile' in a quiet setting.

As I write this, I am sitting in a comfortable chair in front of windows stretching from floor to ceiling. The light of the moon softly reflects gently falling snow and the bright stars in the dark night sky. This is the last evening of my retreat. Tomorrow I leave to go home, back to the hustle and bustle of everyday life. But for tonight there is still the silence.

My spiritual director, a sister of Saint Joseph, is from Hungary. I have met with her daily since my arrival. It is my one occasion to speak each day. On this the final full day, she has asked me to prayerfully reflect on the past week's experiences. I will meet with her one last time tomorrow. As I reread my daily prayer journal, I recall the many ways I have been touched by God's presence on this journey.

The days have passed very quickly and a part of me would like to linger a little longer in this welcoming place of rest. I remember my arrival from Toronto after driving through bumper to bumper traffic on a late Friday afternoon. A sign at the door of the retreat centre reminds me that a retreat is already underway. So upon entering, I respect the silence that is already present. After my busy day of meetings at work and the drive at rush hour, the silence seems almost deafening.

Gradually, over several days, my body begins to slow down. Tensions disappear. I begin to relax and take pleasure in the stillness and peace that envelops me from morning until night.

I am aware my body has entered a new rhythm, a natural rhythm. I forget about deadlines, telephone calls and work left undone. This is a time to be, to live in the present moment, to soak up the peace and quiet. With time as your friend, it is amazing what can enter your life.

During my daily walks outside, I become aware of the simple things that often go unnoticed in my regular routine. I marvel at how the snow glistens like

diamonds in the bright sunshine. I hear the crunch of snow under my feet on a cold crisp winter's day. As the sun sets in a huge red ball, I am awed by the changing colours of the late afternoon sky. No two sunsets are ever alike. A frost, so light and feathery, creates a picture perfect landscape. Everything the frost has touched sparkles in the early morning sunrise. What a gift!

I wonder about the other 40 retreatants. Why have they come to this place? Do they seek rest from their busy and hectic lives? Are they burdened by difficulties? Are they searching for answers or making major life decisions? We come from many walks of life. We are strangers and yet we become a Christian community that lives, worships and prays together in the silence. As I think of this praying community through the week, an image comes to mind. I pick up my pen and write.

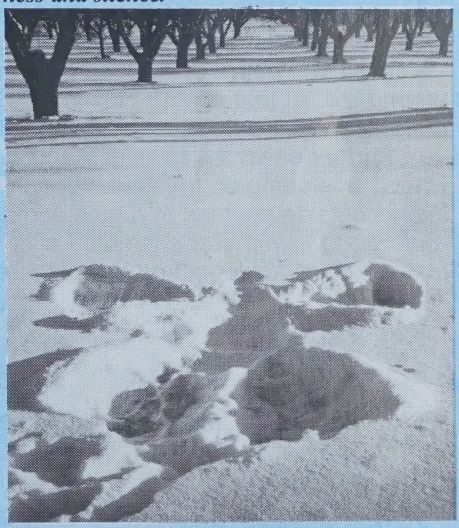
Prayers,
rising like incense up to heaven,
enveloping us in a mantle
of love,
of peace,
of stillness.
God with us.
Alleluia, Amen

Perhaps, they are drawn, as I am, to the contemplative style of receptive prayer. It is a movement away from head to heart. It is a way of opening to the Spirit through praying with Scripture or simply resting in God's presence. I am reminded of words we heard our first evening, 'God speaks in the stillness to a listening heart'.

All too soon, the demands of my life will pick me up and usher me back into the world of activity that awaits my return home. But for tonight, I am content to sit with my thoughts and the silence and a cup of tea.

As I reflect on this experience, my heart is filled with gratitude. This has been a week to nourish body, mind and soul, to feel anew the Spirit's presence in my life. And I know I will return again. Perhaps the silent retreat experience is not for everyone. But the invitation is there for all: '...come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest awhile' (Mark 6:31 NRSV).

Loyola House, Guelph, ON is a Roman Catholic renewal and training centre whose focus derives from Ignatian Spirituality. It offers a number of directed retreats throughout the year in an environment of prayerfulness and silence.



- Photographs on pages 4 and 5 were taken by Charlotte Brown at Loyola House, Guelph, ON.

This Thing Called Beauty

by Doris M. Johnston

Looking back over the years I remember the lovely things I have seen. In my mind's eye I can lay them out in front of me like bright quilt patches and recall the time and the circumstance.

When does one first become aware of beauty? I was three years old. My Dad had taken me to Mr. Taylor's greenhouse to buy a lily for my mother. It was the week before Easter.

Row after row of lilies spread out before me, their petals shimmering and glistening in the filtered light. But, it was the smell of the hyacinths that attracted me. I ran to them. So many colours, so many shades.

I wanted to hug them, to hold them close. It seemed as if the lilies were for grownups, but these sweet smelling spikes that excited me were for children. I gazed on them in awe.

I climbed on an overturned box. From the extra height I could see all around me. At that minute I fell in love with colours, something that would last me all my life.

Further down the rows of plants was a heap of brown earth. I wondered what it was doing on the flower bench. As I looked, the yellow shadows of the leaves outside seemed to dance across it, making a moving pattern. No, the earth was moving. For a minute I was scared. Then I realized there was an animal stretched full length on top of the earth. It was a cat, and nursing contentedly were at least five kittens.

I jumped off the box and streaked down the aisle. Huge yellow eyes, dark fur with patches of ginger and white, and a dear little black nose. Oh, she was beautiful. The flowers paled in comparison. I gazed in rapture.

My heart pounded. I wanted to touch her but I remembered Dad's words. "Don't touch strange animals." I wondered if I could gather up enough courage to ask Mr. Taylor if I could stroke one of the kittens. (I was shy.) I had been so wrapped up in looking, that I hadn't heard Dad or Mr. Taylor come up behind me.

"That's Pansy. Want to

hold a kitten?"

I couldn't say a word. My face burned as I reached for the kitten that looked just like its mother.

"Will you sell this one for 27 cents? That's all I've got."

Both men laughed. I hid my face in Dad's sweater. I felt awful. What had I said wrong?

"You can have them all," Mr. Taylor replied.

Dad made me settle for one, but she had to stay with her mother for another week. I called her Hyacinth. My first and very own piece of beauty.

As I got older, other beautiful things came my way. Some I could hold, like the Medalta vase my sister gave me. Some, like the Ormolu clock I saw in Leeds Castle, or the sun-splashed Japanese maple in my neighbour's garden, I could only hold in memory.

Etched in my mind is the face of an old man who took the sermon one night at church. His wife had recently passed away and he was talking about her. Joy lit up his face as he spoke of the anticipated reunion they would have in heaven.

Later I told a friend he was beautiful. He seemed to be bathed in sunshine.

"He must have sunshine in his soul," she whispered.

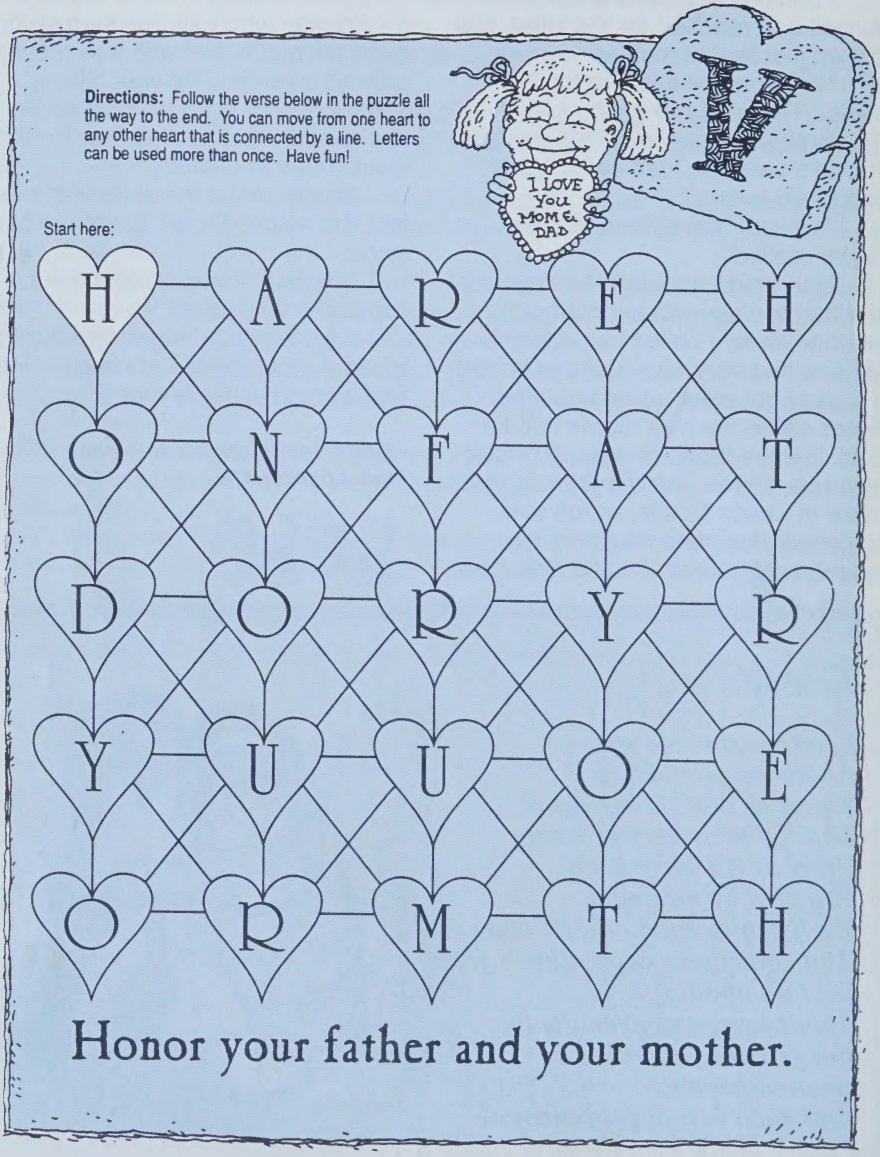
I agreed, but I knew that his was a beauty that didn't just happen. He had worked all his life for it.

- Doris Johnston is a freelance writer from London, ON.

Friends

I cannot say enough
About my friends
Those so dear to my heart
That by their very presence
I feel as if I have been
Touched by an angel
We listen to each other's tears
And sometimes each other's fears
We talk about life
About love, and even death
For friends, we have
Opened hearts
And each is a part of me now.
I don't think I would have made it
Through this world without a friend.

Maureen Kowal


Directions: Follow the verse below in the puzzle all the way to the end. You can move from one heart to any other heart that is connected by a line. Letters can be used more than once. Have fun!
I LOVE YOU MOM & DAD
Start here:
H A R E H
O N F A T
D O R Y R
Y U U O E
O R M T H
Honor your father and your mother.

Answer to puzzle on page 40.

Source: ***Ten to Grow On: Teaching the Ten Commandments to Today's Child*** by Sandra Klaus (ZondervanPublishingHouse, 1992). Available at your local bookstore or by calling 800-727-3480

Roberta G. McClelland is a religion writer from London, ON who has been published in Christian magazines throughout Canada and the United States. She is presently pursuing a combined degree in Theology and Pastoral Studies. She is pictured at right with Harley. This is the third in a series of prayers for daily living.

Prayer for the Gardener...

In my hands
The earth feels soft and moist.
Help me Lord,
To enrich it.

In the earth
The seed seems small and fragile.
Help me Lord,
To nurture it.

In the seed
There is a promise of tomorrow.
Help me Lord,
To realize it.

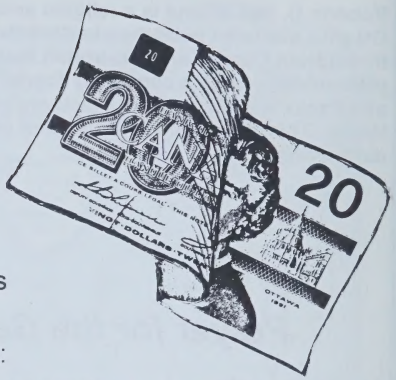
And in tomorrow
There are a thousand blessings.
Help me Lord,
To remember it!

God be with me
In my planting,
In my tending,
And in my harvesting,

Both now and forever,
Amen.

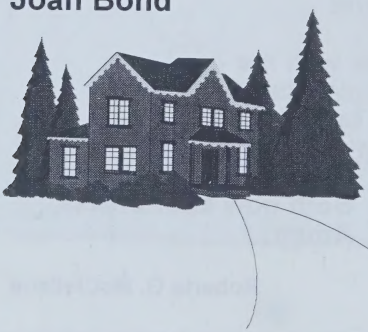
Roberta G. McClelland

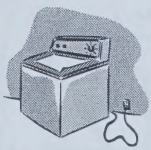
Twenty Bucks



Twenty bucks that's all I can afford,
five dollars each Sunday. Listen God
what do You want? After all
I have restaurants to try out,
patio furniture I must buy,
and designer name clothes my kids insist
they wear. Hey, I'm on a budget, but I confess
my credit card debt is well, sort of high.
Twenty bucks in exchange for Your giving me:
good health, shelter in four, sometimes fierce, seasons,
plenty of food in the refrigerator, plus my very own
washing machine and a bed to sleep on.
Yes, I have electricity and a hot water tank,
while some folks have to boil their water
on a wood burning stove; some even have an outhouse!
Don't get me wrong; I am grateful,
but I do like creature comforts. The Creator You say?
Do I ever consider what the Creator wants?
Are You suggesting the person who deeply loves
gives much? Come to think of it,
twenty bucks isn't an awful lot, Lord.
Maybe we'd better talk some more.

Joan Bond





Catherine of Siena
A Woman with a Mission

Third in a series of articles on early women who influenced Christian thought.

by Maria Stam

During the fourteenth century the Church struggled with internal and external problems. Since 1309, as a civil war made Rome unsafe for the papacy, the popes resided in Avignon, France, protected by the French kings. The city of Florence rebelled against the Church and was put on the interdict. A number of the clergy, including the pope and bishops, lived a life of luxury contrary to their vocation.

Catherine of Siena's remarkable knowledge and love for the Church brought her in contact with two popes. She was revered and admired because of her insights into the relationship between God and humans which aroused the interest of many scholars throughout the centuries up to our time. Catherine did gain her wisdom less from education; much of it came to her in visions and divine inspirations.

Born on March 25, 1347 into a large family in Siena, Italy, she experienced her first vision at the age of six while on her way home from her married sister's house. She saw the Lord, clad in pontifical vestments, sitting on a throne, and near him the apostles Peter, Paul, and John. Jesus smiled at her and blessed her with the sign of the cross. From that moment on Catherine devoted her life to Christ. A year later she made a vow of perpetual virginity, fully aware of the meaning of her commitment despite her young age.

When she was twelve, her mother wanted her to wear finer clothes and take better care of her hair in order to attract a groom. Instead, Catherine cut her hair short. Consequently, she was ordered to do household work and was deprived of her private room. The young girl declared that she would serve the family, but she could never marry as she had taken Jesus as her spouse. Later her father, realizing his daughter's choice was not a childish whim, returned the room to her and supported the way of life she had chosen.

> The knowledge of God and the knowledge of self lead to love. Love in its turn leads to greater knowledge.
>
> Catherine of Siena

In 1363 Catherine joined a lay branch of the Dominican Order. Members wore a white tunic and black cloak but remained with their families. For the following years she led a life of prayer and excessive penance (self-denial and self-mortification was common in the fourteenth century). She left her room only to attend religious offices or speak to her confessor.

Four years later a voice told her to get out and to participate in the life of her

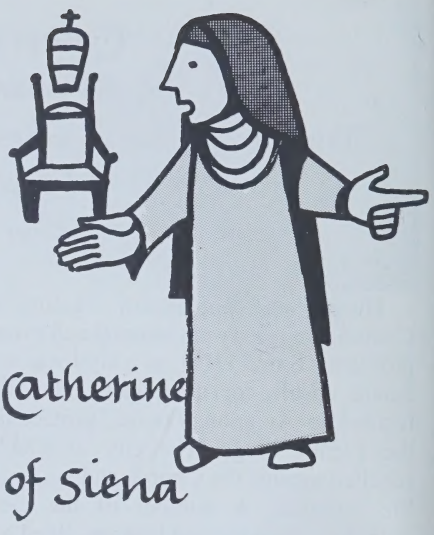
family and the city. Immediately Catherine began to devote her time to serve the sick and the poor. She was often called to help, converting notorious sinners and restoring peace among families. People of all levels began to gather around her for counsel.

By 137O the fame of her spiritual gifts spread beyond Siena. She answered requests for advice by dictating letters to her friends; she did not learn to write before the age of thirty. Pope Gregory XI, knowing Catherine well through her many letters, regarding Church affairs, asked her in 1374 to pray for him and the Church. Deeply concerned, Catherine believed the strength of the Church was spiritual and not material. As the Mystical Body of Christ, she had to continue Christ's work on earth: loving, teaching, healing, and serving.

On April 1, 1376 Catherine received a major revelation. In a letter to the Dominican Raymond of Capua, her spiritual director and later biographer, she wrote: "God revealed His mysteries to me and showed me His wonderful counsel in such a way that my soul no longer knew whether it was in the body, and I was filled with such abundant joy that my tongue has no power to express it."

She believed she was called to be a peacemaker and a scourge to purify the Church. She continued to send letters to cardinals, bishops, kings and queens, telling them what to do. She journeyed great distances to push for reform. She spent long nights in prayer, fasted and suffered, begging God for mercy on the Church.

Pope Gregory XI sent Catherine as mediator to Florence where she was nearly killed in a riot. At last a treaty of peace was signed. Later she travelled to Avignon and begged Gregory XI to return to Rome. When the subject of Rome came up again, he asked her what she would do if she were in his position.



In return Catherine asked, "Who knows what ought to be done better than your Holiness who has long since made a vow to God to return to Rome?" Gregory, astonished that she knew about the promise he had made years ago, realized that only God could have revealed it to her. Now he knew he had to leave France. But his return to Rome was not successful; he did not know the language and customs of the land and how to reform the Church. He died in March 1378.

Catherine had foreseen the Great Western Schism in the Church long before it happened. The new elected pope, Urban VI, unwilling to compromise, alienated many powerful men of the hierarchy. Hearing about disloyalty of some cardinals, Catherine turned again to letter-writing, urging people to be loyal to Pope Urban.

But things turned worse after the pope had named twenty-six new cardinals, of whom most were his personal friends. Disloyal cardinals then elected the antipope, Cardinal Robert of Geneva, who took the name Clement VII and resided in Avignon.

Urban VI sent a personal letter to Catherine, asking her to come to Rome. On a November day she set out with a small group of close friends. They left without food or money, planning to beg like true pilgrims. In the war-torn city they worked and prayed. Catherine offered their suffering as a sacrifice for the sake of the Church. When she assured Pope Urban of her loyalty, he asked her to address the curia.

In a short formal speech she reminded them that their faith was in Jesus Christ; she urged them to have courage, not based on their own power, but on that of Christ. After she finished, Pope Urban said, "This little woman puts us all to shame. We are troubled and afraid, while she, who belongs by nature to the timid sex, is fearless; she even gives us others consolation."

Catherine used much of her energy during her mature years in serving the Church. Aside from her own wonderful relationship with God, she brought healing and conversion to many people. Excessive fasting and penance together with hard work took their toll. During the last months of her life she was too weak to leave her bed. She died on April 29, 1380 in Rome, mourned by thousands.

Catherine's doctrine was: The knowledge of God and the knowledge of self lead to love. Love in its turn leads to greater knowledge. She said, "The soul cannot live without loving, nor could love live without light (understanding). Then, if it wants love, it has to see."

- Maria Stam is a freelance writer from London, ON. She is the author of several books, numerous articles and poems.

A collection of her manuscripts: *The Dialogue, Prayers*, and 381 of her letters are kept in libraries in England (Oxford, Cambridge, London), Italy and elsewhere. Seventy editions of her works, translated in many languages, have been published since the first one appeared in Bologna in 1472.

Catherine of Siena was declared a Saint in 1461 by Pope Pius II. On October 4, 197O she was awarded the title "Doctor of the Church" by Pope Paul VI.

Ref: Anne B. Baldwin, *Catherine of Siena, A Biography*, Our Sunday Visitor Inc., Huntington, Indiana, U.S., 1987

Suzanne Noffke, *Catherine of Siena - Vision Through a Distant Eye*, The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Min, 1996

Giuliana Cavallini, *Catherine of Siena*, Geoffrey Chapman, Wellington House, London, Great Britain, 1998.

The Freedom to Be Imperfect

by Clara Henderson

What do you do when life presents you with difficult situations caused by imperfect people or imperfect circumstancess? How do you deal with imperfections in yourself, in others and in your circumstances?

Last year in December during the rainy season, I traveled to Chiradzulu with a friend to visit the grave of her young husband who had been tragically killed six months previously. They had been living in South Africa at the time. During Christmas she had made a special trip back to Malawi to visit his grave and I felt it was important to accompany her on this particular day since I had been out of the country when his funeral had taken place.

Though I had a four-wheel drive vehicle I was apprehensive about travelling on the rain-damaged road to her in-laws' village because I had just been told by my mechanic that the garage which previously serviced my car had omitted to replace an essential protective covering for my clutch plate.

While a replacement cover was being sought I was advised to avoid driving through water or mud to prevent the possible seizing of my gears. This was pretty much an impossible warning to follow during the rainy season - especially on the Chiradzulu road. However, I felt it was more important to visit my friend's grave than to worry about my unprotected clutch plate. We would be fine as long as the rain held off.

As we drove to the village we came upon a place where a cement drift had been built across a riverbed. My friend was impressed that this development had occurred since her husband's funeral. She reminisced that on the day of the funeral even though it was the dry season, because of the condition of the road, people had to abandon their cars on one side of the riverbed and walk the rest of the way to the graveyard. With the construction of the drift we were able to drive directly to her in-laws' house.

Walking back to the house after the graveside ceremony, I noticed ominous dark clouds approaching from the west. I voiced concern to my friend that we had better get on the road quickly if we wanted to avoid a major thunderstorm. No sooner had I spoken than the first drops of rain began to fall.

By the time we reached the house the rain was bucketing down as it can only do in Malawi. We waited for over two hours for the deluge to subside. As we began our homeward journey I was worried about the condition in which we would find the road.

Our first major obstacle occurred when we came upon a section of road covered in water. My only choice was to drive through the water and hope for the best. Needless to say the car became completely embedded in the mud. So much for keeping my clutch plate free of mud and water.

Villagers from the surrounding area soon

came to our rescue and after an hour of digging with hoes combined with several people pushing the vehicle forward, we were finally freed. Little did we know that our greatest challenge was yet to come.

When we came upon the cement drift my heart sank. Because weeds had clogged the opening beneath the drift where water was supposed to flow, the raging torrent had divided and cut through both sides of the drift. The structural supports on each side had been completely washed away creating two waist-high drops.

What was left was a rectangular cement structure with water flowing all around it. How would we ever get across now? With my active imagination I had visions of us spending weeks marooned on this side of the drift until people and massive construction equipment came to build a replacement structure. I had no hope whatsoever that we, to say nothing of my car, would be back in Blantyre in the near future.

Noticing my anxious expression as we got out of the car to assess the situation, one of the villagers quickly assured me that I shouldn't worry. They would repair the drift so that I could cross. Right, I thought. With what? I could see no materials with which to repair it. I felt hopeless and very skeptical but resigned myself to the fact that I had no choice but to leave myself to the mercy of these optimists.

As a few men set to work removing the obstruction of weeds from beneath the drift, others began gathering large boulders from nearby fields. When the weeds had been removed, the water flowing down each side of the drift began to flow beneath it as originally intended.

With both sides of the drift now free from rushing water those gathering boulders were able to begin building up the sides with a combination of these boulders, the weeds they had just removed, and remnants of the original structure that had been washed away.

Over the course of the next two hours, before my unbelieving eyes, two makeshift ramps were constructed. Soon, one of the villagers approached and triumphantly informed me that I could safely cross now.

Bracing myself for a sudden plunge into the riverbed I drove across the repaired structure with little difficulty, raising a great cheer from those that had gathered to watch the spectacle. With profuse thanks and tokens of appreciation we took leave of the crowd and made our way back to Blantyre before the sun had set.

During the drive home I pondered my initial lack of faith in the possibility of a positive outcome to our dilemma. When confronted with the problem of the impassable drift all I could see were the impossibilities before me.

Instead of following the villagers' example of accepting that the structure had fallen apart and trying to figure out what could be done to deal with the situation constructively, my attention got side-tracked by my irritation with the fact that we live in an imperfect world.

If people were perfect and objects and structures were perfect then we wouldn't be facing this problem. If the drift had been properly maintained and the weeds removed periodically the river would have

My irritation spirals into despair over all of life's imperfections and hardships so that I am blinded to any kind of hope or any possible solution to the problem at hand.

flowed beneath it as intended and the rains would not have damaged it.

If those constructing the drift had mixed the proper combination of cement and sand (as we later discovered they hadn't) the structure might not have fallen apart. If those repairing my car hadn't forgotten to replace the protective covering on the clutch plate I wouldn't have been so anxious about the gears seizing and my car breaking down.

If the rain had just held off for an hour we wouldn't have found ourselves in this situation. If death had not so unfairly stolen my friend's husband at such an early age we wouldn't even have been on this trip. I could have gone on and on pointing out imperfections. In seemingly impossible situations my thought patterns tend to follow the same negative path. My irritation spirals into despair over all of life's imperfections and hardships so that I am blinded to any kind of hope or any possible solution to the problem at hand.

Living With Our Imperfect Selves in an Imperfect World

I tend to get even more irritated when a difficult situation is created by my own imperfection. We can all think of scenarios in which the fact that we aren't perfect has caused tension in relationships or problems in work situations.

If we have forgotten an appointment, or said something hurtful when we have been angry, or have found it difficult to be nice to someone who is unpleasant, we are aware of the problems we have created because of the fact that we aren't perfect and others aren't perfect.

It is hard to live with our imperfect selves in an imperfect world. We lament "If only so and so wasn't so mean then they would be easier to get along with; if only cars didn't break down we wouldn't have to worry about driving conditions; if you could just understand how I am feeling we wouldn't have problems in our relationship; we could go on and on lamenting."

If people were perfect and objects and structures were perfect then we wouldn't be facing this problem.

It is not that we or others always do these imperfect things intentionally. Sometimes we know the right thing to do in a situation and we try to do it but we fail. We can identify with Paul in Romans 7:15- 24 when he says:

"I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

"So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?" (NRSV)

The Origin of the Knowledge of Our Imperfection

Why did Paul feel this way? Why do we feel this way? Why are we so aware of the imperfections in our lives and our inability

Because of Christ's perfection in us we have been freed to simply accept our own imperfection and the imperfection of others.

to always do the right thing in any given relationship or situation? In Hebrews 8:10 we read that in the new covenant relationship with God through Jesus Christ we have God's laws written on our hearts and minds.

"This is the covenant that I will make... I will put my laws in their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God and they shall be my people."NRSV)

Even our friends who do not profess to be Christians know when they are doing something wrong like stealing or being unkind by saying hurtful things about another person. God's law is in all of our hearts and minds whether we recognize it or not. Most often we refer to this knowledge as our conscience.

God's Requirement of Perfection

If we really want to get negative about all these imperfections in our lives, as Christians we can further lament that the Bible tells us that in order to come into God's presence we must be perfect because God is perfect. In other words God requires perfection of us if we desire a relationship with God.

In the Old Testament we read that priests served as mediators between God and humankind. They were always making offerings and sacrifices for the people's imperfections or sins as we call them in order to maintain a right relationship with God. So what are we supposed to do today?

How are we supposed to be perfect - to be made right with God - if we are fallen people that live in a fallen world? How are we supposed to follow those 10 commandments if we are defeated right from the start? It doesn't seem fair. We can echo Paul's words in Romans 7:24-8:4 when he says "Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?" But then Paul's answer to this question is found in the next verse.

"Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with my mind I am a slave to the law of God, but with my flesh I am a slave to the law of sin.

"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."

Paul is basically telling us that yes we are imperfect but we don't have to despair because Jesus Christ met God's requirement of perfection for us. Because of the once and for all sacrifice of Jesus Christ we can come into God's presence. In Hebrews chapter 10:14 we read that "by a single offering Christ has perfected for all time those who are sanctified." We don't need priests any more to make sacrifices for us so that we can approach God. Christ is now our high priest.

In Hebrews 9:11-14 we also read that "Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come...[through his sacrifice] he [purifies] our conscience from dead works to worship the living God!"

Basically the Bible is telling us here that

there is nothing we can do to make our relationship right with God except to accept Jesus Christ as our mediator with God.

Accepting a gift without paying anything for it or earning it in someway is hard to do and requires a certain graciousness. In this context it is called grace. All that is required of us is to simply receive God's grace.

Accepting Our Imperfection

So where does that leave us as we deal with the imperfections or sinfulness of our daily lives? If God doesn't expect us to be perfect then how can we expect ourselves or others to be perfect? How can we expect our world to be perfect? We can't. Because of Christ's perfection in us we have been freed to simply accept our own imperfection and the imperfection of others.

In accepting these imperfections does that mean we are also freed to just run around and selfishly hurt others and destroy relationships and lives because through Christ we are acceptable to God?

That is certainly within our potential but because God's laws are in our hearts and minds we are aware of the wrong we do and the hurt we cause and in essence we find that none of us really wants to intentionally and consistently bring harm to others.

So, instead of going about being destructive because of God's willingness to always accept us through Jesus Christ, and instead of just throwing our hands up in despair and lamenting that we are imperfect and that there is nothing we can do about it, we can instead rejoice that we are freed to accept our imperfection - to accept who we truly are.

Then we can rejoice that we are freed to accept God's grace as a remedy to our imperfections. From this point we can shift our focus away from dwelling on the imperfection and on to how we can do something positive about our situations and creatively deal with the imperfections we come across daily.

In this perspective lies our hope - our sense that despite our context of imperfection the potential is there for us to work towards making an imperfect situation bearable and livable. The next time we are frustrated because of the problems created in our lives by the imperfection of ourselves or others or our circumstances, instead of dwelling on that irritation and falling into despair as I did when I was faced with the damaged drift, let us try to see how we can creatively deal with the situation to make it better as the villagers of Chiradzulu did that day.

This positive approach to imperfection is not easy. It takes more courage to believe that something constructive can come to pass in the face of seemingly impossible circumstances. It is easier to resign oneself to a negative outcome and to sit down and give up in despair because then no effort is required to even try to come up with a creative solution to the problem.

Having faith that all things can work together for good in the midst of life's imperfections and actually putting effort into making the best of the imperfect situation should be part of the fabric of our daily lives. With the assurance of God's grace and love to sustain us, we can dare to believe in the miracle of seemingly impossible situations being completely turned around into possibilities right before our eyes.

We don't have to despair because Jesus Christ met God's requirement of perfection for us.

My Father's Hands

Today brings back fond memories
Of a time many years ago
My father's hands were firm and strong
When mine were very small.
Those hands worked hard from early morn
Until the end of day
To ensure his family was content
While mine were busy at play.
Those hands turned the pages in my favorite book
While he read to me by the oil-lamp light
Those hands gave comfort and warmed me with love
When he tucked me into bed at night.
Those patient hands taught me to ride a bike
Dried my tears and wiped my nose
I remember the love on my mother's face
When those hands gave her a rose.
Those hands would applaud when I'd made him proud
He supported my dreams and plans
And when things went wrong I was reassured
By the touch of those gentle hands.

The years have gone by very quickly it seems
Now my son has become a man
He was fortunate too, to know as he grew
The love in poppy's hands.
My dad's grown old and feeble now
And weary from the many miles he's trod
When his journey's done those hands I love
Will clasp the hands of God.

Mary Roche

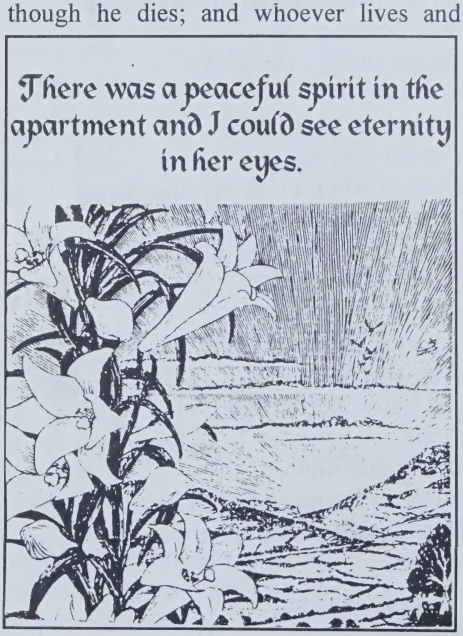
Slip Peacefully into the Light

by Bonnie Bamberry

I went to visit my family in British Columbia one summer. One month later, my grandmother found out she had lung cancer. She was given three months to live. The doctor said the tumor was impossible to remove.

I didn't have a very good relationship with my grandmother while I was a child but when I found about the cancer, I did everything I could to help. I called and wrote to her frequently. I sent flowers and other gifts.

My grandmother did not believe she was going to die. She sought spiritual help through the church. A group of women put their hands on her and prayed for her. She prayed the prayer of repentance and faith with one of them. I sent her a Bible and the scripture I highlighted was, Christ speaking, "He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die" (John 11:25-26 NIV). Grandma had put her faith in Jesus Christ.



My grandmother began experiencing wild mood swings. One minute she was crying and complaining about pain and the next she was laughing and cracking jokes. There were times when she was very strong, though. I went to see her in the spring of the following year, seven months after they had given her three months to live. She was in a more stable mood. I think acceptance had come to her.

When I first saw her, I thought she was beautiful. There was a peaceful spirit in the apartment and I could see eternity in her eyes. She smiled at me. I gave her a big hug and a kiss. (She had pneumonia and I caught it from her but it was worth it.)

I spent two weeks with her. I made her favorite meal for her and we were able to spend time alone reading the Bible and praying. She prayed a blessing over me and gave me some of her things to remember her by.

Soon the pneumonia caused one of lungs to fill up with water and she had to go to the hospital. Once when I went to visit her, she was sleeping so I sat and watched her for a while. She must have felt something because she woke up, looked at me and smiled.

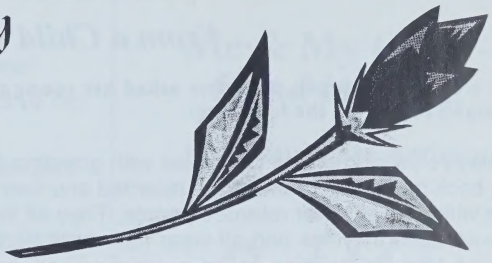
Three weeks after I left B. C., Grandma died. Before she died, the priest came to her bedside and gave her the last rites. She made confessions to her children, the priest and to God. Then at two a.m. on May 7, 1997, she slipped peacefully into the light.

- Bonnie Bamberry is an award winning writer from Belleville, Ontario.

Return To Bethany

(In memory of my mother, Martine E. Jansen van Beek (née van Driessen)

by Sophia N. Joy, December 30, 1999



I visited my elderly mother for the first time after she had been moved to an extended care facility. The location seemed vaguely familiar, however the building itself was not. It was not until later that I remembered visiting Bethany more than forty years earlier as a pastoral student.

I found my mother more alert than I remembered her from my last visit at home. We attended the church service, and went on a tour of the building afterward. She loved the flowers, and we talked about how she had missed her plants when we emigrated to Canada. After her nap, we shared lunch. The tables were beautifully decorated with flowers from one of the staff's garden. We talked about this and that, reminiscing.

One of the male residents finished his lunch, and moved his wheelchair to the exit. My chair was in his way, so I moved to the other side of the table. He then touched my mother's wheelchair, so I moved her out of the way. Next thing I knew, he bumped into my chair - again! I did not know what to do, so I took a cue from my mother; she just ignored him! He eventually moved, and then I heard one of the staff say, "No, I will not move you! You can do it yourself!" At that moment my mother gave me a wink, and I felt at peace.

My mother taught me that joy is both now and forever.

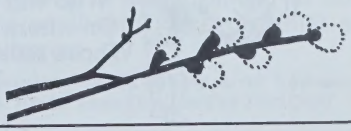
After the funeral, I returned to Bethany to say goodbye to the roommate who had shared my mother's room for the last six months of her life. She and another resident were in the dining room in front of a bird cage with two budgies. They were enjoying the birds' antics, and assured me that they could talk. The older resident said, "We do have fun here!"

Life goes on, both here and beyond. In the wink of her eye, my mother taught me that joy is both now and forever.

Bent Sapling

How easily a sapling
can be bent, just as you wish.
Yet, decades later down life's track
if you return, I know you'll find
you cannot bend
it back.

Richard W. Unger



Retirement...

...*From a Child's View*

After a Christmas break, a teacher asked her young pupils how they spent their holidays. One small boy wrote the following:

We always used to spend Christmas with grandma & grandpa. They used to live here in a big brick home, but grandpa got retarded and they moved to Florida. Now they live in a place with a lot of other retarded people. They all live in little tin boxes. They ride on big three-wheeled tricycles and all wear nametags because they don't know who they are. They go to a big building called a wrecked hall; but if it was wrecked they got it fixed because it's alright now. They play games and do exercise there but they don't do them very good.

There is a swimming pool there. They go into it and just stand there with their hats on. I guess they don't know how to swim. As you go into their park, there is a doll house with a little man sitting in it. He watches all day so they can't get out without seeing them. When they can sneak out they go to the beach and pick up shells that they think are dollars.

My grandma used to bake cookies and stuff, but I guess she forgot how. Nobody cooks, they just eat out. They eat the same thing every night, "early birds". Some of the people are so retarded that they don't know how to cook at all, so my grandma and grandpa bring food into the wrecked hall and they call it "pot luck".

My grandma says grandpa worked all his life and earned his retardment. I wish they would move back up here, but I guess the little man in the doll house won't let them out.

Anonymous

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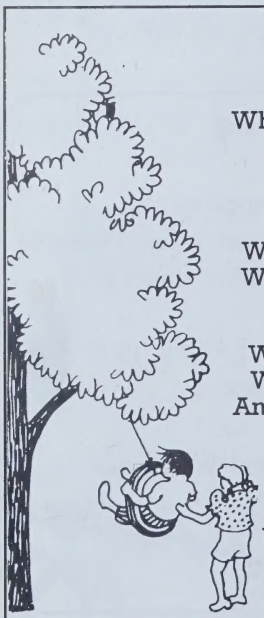


Your Mother

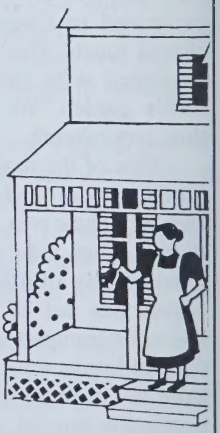
Who loved you from the very start
When you were close beneath her heart
And suffered long to give you life?
Your mother.

Who fed and nursed you tenderly
When you were a babe upon her knee
Who taught you prayers at end of day?
Your mother.

Who guided you and taught you truth
When you were just a growing youth,
And hid her heartache when you erred?
Your mother

Who will always be your friend
On whom you really can depend
Whose love for you will never end?
Your mother.

Gladys Nolan



See Me!

Look at me and what do you see?
A shadow of someone who used to be me;
A cranky old woman who fusses and frets,
Whenever her wishes haven't been met.
Who sits in this chair hour after hour,
With memory no friend, and no hope for tomorrow
Who does nothing all day except murmur and cry -
A senile old woman just waiting to die.

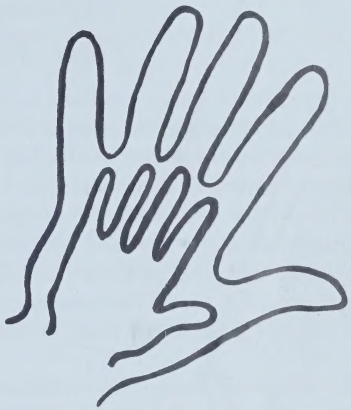
Look again at me, I want you to see
The wonderful person I used to be.
See me as a child in a warm, loving home
With brothers and sisters and never alone;
A happy young mother with babes at my knee,

A husband who loves and cherishes me;
With plans for the future full of promise and hope
A long life before me, death so remote.
Come closer now and try hard to see -
Not this feeble old body, but instead, see ME!

Mary Roche

Me & My Gran - *Hand in Hand*

Grandparents Activity



Use the following activity to create a special memory with your grandchild, great niece or nephew. They will treasure the memories for years to come.

* Child draws around grandparent's hand then places their own hand in outline of grandparent's hand and grandparent traces child's hand. This drawing can be used as a framed keepsake or laminated into a placemat.

* Another idea is to trace the hand prints on fabric and embroider. This is an opportunity for a grandparent to teach a grandchild how to embroider.

* Craft stores also have fabric paints which could be used to outline the hand-prints on T-shirts for grandchild and grandparent.

- Reprinted from Sandycove Acres Community News. Winter Issue Dec/Jan/Feb 1999/2000

program...program...program...program...program...program.....

Margaret Robertson
Program Secretary

New Millennium: New Ways And Means!

Does your WMS group continue to meet in a style that was adopted at the end of the 19th century when Presbyterian women first began to meet regularly? Do you spend two to three hours doing 'business' and use the time left over for 'study'? Have you always met the third Tuesday afternoon of each month, no matter what?

It is now the year 2000. The beginning of a new century, and a new millennium is an opportunity to assess how and why we do what we do. It can even be an opportunity to do things differently, maybe even to *change*! WMS groups have usually been regular, ongoing groups, using the model that bases their meetings on business and study. But there are many more ways of gathering of being in and supporting the mission of the Church of Jesus Christ.

New ways of being in mission: You may choose to use one or more of these ideas as a supplement to what you already do or as a new challenge for your group.

**Begin by* starting a discussion with others who are interested in mission. They may be people who are already part of a WMS group or they may be people like yourself who are committed to mission. They may even be *men or children*!

**Decide how* you will gather for action and/or study and worship. What is your purpose? Will you be using the WMS purpose as your basis?

WMS

The Women's Missionary Society is a community of Christians whose purpose, in response to the love of God in Jesus Christ, is to encourage one another and all the people of the church to be involved in local and world mission through prayer, study, service and fellowship.

What about...

**Forming a group* of interested persons who will commit themselves to participate in a four-to-six week study? There are many excellent studies available: the Mission Studies produced by The PCC; Horizons Bible Study (PCUSA); *Sharing the Wealth: Education for*

Jubilee, Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative; *Close the Gap Between Rich & Poor,* Ten Days for Global Justice, or the *Women's March Action Kit for World March of Women 2000* are a few examples.

Bringing together a group of people who are interested in a specific mission action?

* If you help at the **local food bank** - perhaps you might like to meet with other volunteers to discuss the issues that arise from this kind of work. This may also lead you into a Bible Study, Mission Study, or Prayer gathering around these issues.

* There are a number of **Mission Exposure Tours** planned for 2000 and 2001 (see page 30). Do one or more people in your area intend to participate? If so, are there plans to meet after the trip for study and interpretation.

* Plan a local **"mission exposure tour"** - ie, visiting a local food bank, churches that are involved in **'Out of the Cold'** programs, **inner city** programs, **summer camps** that integrate children from the inner cities, **shelters**, or any special agency in your area that is a 'mission' oriented program. If you are near Toronto, you may like to plan a**visit to Church Offices** at 50 Wynford to see how mission is coordinated through Life and Mission Agency and supported by the WMS. This may lead to participants finding new ways of being in mission.

Plan for a new way to meet instead of inviting prospective members into an existing group. Research tells us that a group that has been formed for six months or more is no longer an inclusive group. That means that we do not accept new members easily. This is hard for most of us to understand. We feel that we are warm and welcoming. But we forget that we make 'in group' references that new members do not understand.

Some possibilities:

* **Breakfast meeting** (ie Saturday or Sunday morning, or even an appropriate week day!)
* **Coffee Club** gathering for young moms (include babysitting)
* **Retreat**
* **One day or half day event** - conference or congress
* **Camp**

Friends of WMS: We usually think of WMS in terms of women participating directly and having associate members or home helpers. What about having "friends of WMS" - people who support the mission of the church but don't attend meetings or events. These may be the children who are using the Learning/Sharing study, Church School teachers, Vacations Church School teachers, youth and/or their leaders, or other women's groups who are not registered with WMS. Council Executive approved this at the February 2000 meeting.

There many possibilities. Often new energy comes with a new adventure. Be creative in the ways you meet, study and live out your call to God's mission.

Take Action: Meet the New Millennium in a New Way!

Seniors on the Go

Living out of Cans, Boxes and Bags

by Norma Tomlinson

Getting Ready for the "Bug" Days of Summer.

Using Kitchen Fare to Get rid of bugs!

*In an outside area where flies are a problem, blow up a brown paper bag, tie it with a string and hang in a breeze. The flies will think it is a wasp's nest and stay away.

*Dip a popsicle stick in molasses. Stick the other end near plants in dirt, up to the molasses line. The bugs get stuck and you can remove them, and the stick to the garbage.

*Plant care people spray plants in nursing homes, hospitals or offices for bugs with mouthwash, such as Listerine. It is hard on bugs and easy on people.

Forward in Faith

It is with deep gratitude to our members that we view our Financial Statement for the year 1999. Presbyterial givings amounted to $12,099 more than in 1998, although these basically were monies from 1998 which were not remitted early enough to be included in the 1998 receipts.

Undesignated legacies for the year 1999 increased by more than $111,000 over the previous year. We are indebted to former members, who in past years gave of their time and resources for the work of the Women's Missionary Society, and who, through bequests to the Society, are still making mission outreach possible.

As Christians living in Canada we have much for which to be thankful. An anonymous poet has writen:

We're loaded with benefits daily
Sent down from the Father above;
His mercies and blessings abounding
Are gifts of His marvellous love.

We would convey the thanks of Council Executive to all who have shared their gifts with us, thus enabling us to meet our financial requirements for 1999.

Presbyterial Givings for 1999: $823,184
Undesignated Legacies for 1999: $299,811

Giollo Kelly, Treasurer

Pneumonia Prevention Vests & Caps

Your Help is Needed

The members of the WMS have very generously supported the pneumonia prevention vests knitting projects over the past 2-3 years. Each box of knitting that is sent out by International Ministries holds approximately 35-40 vests. From June to December 1999, 54 boxes of vests, caps, blankets, finger puppets, etc were mailed overseas. To February 7 in 2000, 15 boxes were sent. These numbers do not include the bags and suitcases carried by PCC staff and friends traveling overseas.

Recently Jan Fourney, a member of the WMS, responded to an appeal to help with the packing. **Your help is also needed.** It costs $35-50 to mail a box overseas. With the tremendous response to this project, the mailing costs are much greater than anticipated. Perhaps, a financial gift could accompany knitted goods. Perhaps your group could make your congregation aware of the situation and encourage everyone to play a part in the success of this project, especially those who are unable to contribute knitting.

We want this worthwhile project to continue. So many babies, children and adults have been blessed through the work of our knitters' hands. **As you are able, please help.**

Direct financial gifts to Mary Beth McLean, Finance Administrator, International Ministries, 50 Wynford Drive, North York, ON M3C 1J7.

"I"-Witness

God answers Prayer

Last Thursday evening, I came down with a dreadful toothache - the pain was absolutely excruciating. I prayed that God would help me endure until the morning when I would get in touch with my dentist.

Friday morning I phoned my dentist - to be told that the office was closed for the day. I was devastated. I didn't know what to do next. I phoned my son because it was his day off. No answer, so I told his machine what was happening.

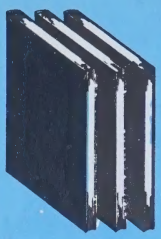
As it happened, my granddaughter got the message and told her mother. Maureen dropped her work immediately and came to see what she could do. She took me to the hospital where I got antibiotics and pain killers.

Saturday I phoned the dental office. My dentist was away on holiday, so it was suggested that I see his partner. But how to get there. I prayed. And guess what?

The phone rang and there was a man on the line who belongs to the same "chat" group to which I belong. He lives only a few blocks away and he offered to come and take me to the dentist. Then they made an appointment for me to see a "root canal" specialist the same day, and this very kind gentleman came for me, took me to the specialist, and waited to bring me home.

Who says God doesn't answer prayer. He sure answered mine. I am not completely over the incident, my tooth is still sore and my face still swollen but the pain is gradually receding.

Kay Berry, Richmond, BC



BOOKS

Order from:
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1-800-619-7301
Please do not send payment with your order. (An invoice including postage and applicable tax will be sent with your order.) Please include name and location of congregation. **Note: VISA and Mastercard now accepted.**

Talking with a business consultant recently, I learned that the two main growth industries in recreation were gardening – and birding!

People of all ages and both genders are getting back to nature in a big way!

Here are some resources which may nurture some growth in you, or will celebrate one who gave you life... MOM.
Trish Heidbrecht, Book Room Manager

365 Simple Gifts from God: Raising your spiritual awareness
By John Killinger
Spirituality is not as "other" worldly as you might think. On the contrary, it appears to be very "this-worldly", rooted in life, feelings and surroundings. It involves an awareness of the presence of God; but it also awakens our sensitivity to everything around us.

Each day's reading begins with a practical suggestion, such as "Pay attention to the humour in the world", followed by a brief reflection on how the underlying idea can draw you closer to God. Applicable quotations from Scripture and other writings are included to help enrich your reflection and imagination in thoughtful ways. Enjoy a year of becoming aware of God's creative genius in everything your eyes behold!

Dimensions for Living GG7097 $24.50

Like a Garden: A Biblical Spirituality of Growth
By Sara Covin Juengst
This is much more than a book on gardening. Many times in scripture, the garden has been used as a metaphor to convey images of God's providential care, what it means to bear fruit as a Christian, and what the harvest is that we await in the new heaven and earth. Juengst discusses ancient gardening routines to shed light on the significance of the symbolism in such garden passages in the Bible. At the centre stands God the Gardener, who presides with care, planning, and discipline over the garden of the earth.

Sara Covin Juengst is a Presbyterian minister in the PCUSA and is the author of the terrific book Breaking Bread: The Spiritual Significance of Food in which she takes a similar approach with the food customs of biblical times.
Westminster John Knox Press GG5907 $19.25

Freckles: A Young Man's Courageous Adventures in the Limberlost Forest
By Gene Stratton-Porter
Ninety-six years since its first printing, this charming story continues to delight readers of all ages. "Freckles was Stratton-Porter's first great book, her first unputdownable one. It has everything: a one-handed nameless orphan known as Freckles, a beautiful girl he calls The Swamp Angel, an

understanding lumber boss named McLean, a kind family to board with, the bird woman, and bad guys to provide suspense. But it is much more than the sum of its parts; it is an open door into God's second book, The Book of Nature. Nature is revealed, not merely in passing, but by one of the greatest naturalists of our century." This celebratory edition comes with questions for personal or group reflection.

Tyndale GG7120 $16.50 softcover, illustrated.

Where Does a Mother Go to Resign?
By Barbara Johnson
Wait... this is not a book for mothers of teens or toddlers! Here is the original story of how the "Christian Erma Bombeck" faced life in the face of loss after loss. When she didn't just shrivel up and die after lying on her bed looking at her wallpaper for days, she decided to live and made sure that she had a steady diet of laughter, joy and hope. Through the sharing of her story, thousands of others have found their own way back to joy.
Funny, courageous, and inspirational.

Bethany House GG5117 $14.95

The Tie that Binds: Meditations for mothers and daughters
By Nancy Otto Boffo and Linda Tomblin
Mothers and daughters share a unique and vital bond... binding ties that endure for a lifetime. While daughters have friends, grow up, and eventually they may marry, the relationship they have with their mothers lasts a lifetime. Here are a collection of devotions that examines and honours the chapters of your mother/daughter relationship through dreams, special times, surprises, challenges, growth and faith.

CPH GG6685 $21.50

- Trish Heidbrecht, left, welcomes Susan Clarke to The Book Room staff.

Book Room Appointment

The Women's Missionary Society is pleased to announce the appointment of Susan Clarke as Customer Service Resource Consultant (Assistant to the Manager) in The Book Room as of February 1, 2000. She replaces Martha Carmichael who resigned in the fall due to a residential move from Mississauga to Cambridge.

Susan brings to this position a strong background in customer service. As well as many in-store duties, Susan will also be responsible for the greatest percentage of sales events outside the office. She will assume management of The Book Room operations in the Manager's absence. She will serve as the primary contact person for WMS Literature Secretaries and consignment bookings.

With her contagious enthusiasm and good humour, Susan has already become a welcome addition to the WMS staff. If you happen to drop in and visit The Book Room in the future, please take the time to introduce yourself to Susan and make her feel welcome.

Susan lives in Milton and has three children, ages nineteen, sixteen and fourteen.

FLAMES MISSION TOURS

PERIPATETIC PRESBYTERIANS AND TRAVELLING THEOLOGUES in Eastern Europe have unpacked and are visiting sites as old as 1541 (the Reformed Church College in Sarospatak) and talking with people as vital as Daniel Szabo, the 1996 Johnson award winner for outstanding mission work. Their worship services this May will vary from the traditional liturgy in the Hungarian Reformed Church in Nagydobrony to the liturgy of the gypsy community of Szernye. They will have tea with the Bishop and eat lunch in the Reformed Church of Romania's "Kitchen for the Poor." They will hear the combined voices of the Male Chorus of the Hungarian Theological Seminary and the singular voices of their host families in the village of Kalotaszentkiraly.

W.M.S. WOMEN, MODERN MISSIONARIES, AND ANTICIPATORY ADVENTURERS are busy packing and re-packing their small suitcases and knapsacks, making room for the mosquito net, awaiting their mid-May departure for Nairobi, Kenya and the Blantyre area of Malawi. No longer photographic images, the reality of the Street Kids Camp and Society, the pride in small businesses generated through Christian craft projects, and the necessity for on-going AIDS Education, will all become a part of their discoveries half a world away. The importance of the Mulanji Mission Hospital, the success of each women's guild (Mvano), and the need for Orphan Care Centres will reinforce for them the positive effects of the mission presence and projects supported by the active participation of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

YES, it is easier to identify with the needs of others when seen first-hand. That is the rationale for the mission initiative, FLAMES MISSION TOURS. We invite you to participate in Fall 2000 when we will visit Mozambique & Malawi, Guatemala & El Salvador, the Holy Land, and India. All tours are designed to be of least possible cost, offering airfare, inland transportation, most meals and basic accommodation. Contact Sarah Hoag at 1-800-619-7301 x249, or by email at shoag@presbyterian.ca .

AND, NO REGRETS... if you wish you had signed up for the Eastern Europe trip or the one to Kenya & Malawi, let us know. Because our groups are small, we can do repeats!

MISSION IN ACTION

Joe Reed
Managua, Nicaragua

I have just arrived in Managua after attending the meetings of our mission partners: the Fraternity of Evangelical Churches of Costa Rica (FIEC). Next week, it is on to El Salvador!

A spirit of new beginning infused the meetings of the FIEC at their 15th anniversary party. A number of new churches and missions, many from the northern province of Guanacaste, entered the denomination. One larger church, a founding member of the group, left. At an early sederunt, the assembly decided to make yet another overture to this church, that of Santa Barbara, in an effort to try to understand the source of their discontent.

Always an interesting mixture, the FIEC has been characterized as "one of the most exciting new denominations in Latin America." A breakaway from a quite conservative denomination dominated at times by US missionaries, the FIEC was born as a theologically conservative, yet socially conscious and active group of churches, mostly located in and around the capital of San José. Conflicts over properties consumed enormous energy during the early years.

For a number of years PWS&D has supported a program of consumer co-operatives in which basic grains are purchased from a native community in the southern part of the country at prices slightly higher than market price and sold in poor neighbourhoods in the capital at prices below that on the street. That project officially ends in June of this year.

One of the interesting elements of the FIEC has always been the diversity of its pastors. All work at tentmaking ministries; some are shoemakers or bakers, but others are professors at the Latin American Biblical University.

The churches which have just entered lean towards the Pentecostal in expression. The fact that someone led prayer certainly did not impede others from praying aloud simultaneously. Song was lively, and led by young people, but also by a peasant group from one of the new churches in the countryside.

Another characteristic of the FIEC has been the care with which it has cultivated relationships with a diversity of partners. It relates to our church nationally (and its executive secretary has sat as an international member of the PWS&D Committee). It also maintains a relationship with the Disciples of Christ and with the Presbytery of Lake Huron of the PCUSA. Individual congregations have a diversity of relationships with congregations in the North. Representatives came from one such church in Kansas.

For Canadian Presbyterians, the meetings of the Baptist Federation of El Salvador continue to deepen relationships between the two churches. Many will know of the placement of Jim and Brenda Patterson to the Baptist Federation of El Salvador (FEBES). Others will know that International Ministries has brought Sandra and Walter Orantes (and their two-year-old son, Miguelito) to study in Toronto. We hope

to sign a formal partnership agreement before the year's end.

A Different Kind of Internship

In December, David and Grace Choi, from Knox College concluded an internship in Managua. David worked at the Batahola Community, an active Roman Catholic community with a wide diversity of social ministries ranging from natural medicine to computer science to electronics and a children's library. David taught Tae Kwon Do both at Batahola and at a YMCA Centre in one of the poorest neighbourhoods in the city. His work here helped focus for David, for myself, and for both Knox and International Ministries many of the issues raised by international placements. He hopes to return to Managua in the near future.

Update on Francisco Coll School, Guatemala

On February 4, I was pleased to visit with Sister Gladys Chang of the Francisco Coll School. Our discussions ranged wide. Presently there is a total of 198 students enrolled. The enrolment continues to grow steadily and such growth is both an encouragement and a concern in the school.

There are six teachers: two paid by congregations of the Presbyterian Church in Canada; two, by the congregation of the Anunciata; and two, up until now, by students in several US high schools. The commitment from these US sources ended in December, 1999.

Gladys has requested a renewal of the agreement but so far, has heard nothing. Her congregation advanced funds for the month of January for these two additional teachers, but she is financing them on a month-to-month basis until she hears from the States.

Presbyterian Church in Canada funds are being used for the two teachers above noted, for part of the costs of the morning snacks, and for scholarships for students who have graduated and who are now attending secondary school. At the moment there are nine such students.

International Ministries has agreed to send funds to replace the student desks in the first and second grade classes. At present, these students are using desks which are too big for them and which take up too much space. There are over fifty students in grade one, for example (admittedly, the extreme example) and their desks really do not fit. The students need a total of 100 desks for the two grades (Q9000 or Cdn$1800).

Costs of the scholarships for students continuing past the elementary level are, all included, Q8000 (Cdn1600) per student per year. Students now enrolled have really done their elementary school proud. They have an excellent reputation for hard work at the secondary level. Understandably, their elementary skills are somewhat behind those from other schools.

On the other hand, they have demonstrated both intelligence and dedication, having swum against the flow for their whole primary school experience. There are so many reasons not to continue to study that those who actually graduate have already demonstrated their commitment.

The funds collected in last year's Learning-Sharing project then, will cover the costs of scholarships for a bit over two years. Alternate funding will then have to be found.

Once the above nine students get their "basico" diploma, four options open to them: to drop out (their achievements have already been quite remarkable and they have a "leg up" on others); to pursue

OVERSEAS STAFF BIRTHDAYS

July
22 - Makram Barsoum, Cyprus
31 - Jonathan Schwarz, Nepal

August
6 - Pei Kang Dai, China
9 - Aleida Villalonga, Nicaragua
9 - Ken Kim, Guatemala
15 - Urey Karen Onuoha, Nigeria
18 - Betty Geddes, Taiwan
18 - Daniel Schwarz, Nepal
29 - Mona Barsoum, Cyprus

their high school leaving certificate, or "bachillerato" (three additional years); follow a secretarial course for two to three years; or to train to become teachers themselves (three years). Teachers at the school earn Q15,000 (Cdn$ 3000) per year.

And, on a personal note:

Dear women of the mission societies,

I want, most of all, to thank you for your prayers, financial support, and letters. I hesitate to speak for everyone in the field, but feel certain that we all enjoy your greetings and cards. I really do try to answer each and every one I receive, although sometimes I am late: it is already mid-February and I have before me cards from my birthday (in November) and Christmas! What a wonderful thing it is to be part of a worldwide family.

Can I ask a favour? Could you please enclose your return address on your card? I have before me one which reads, *Did enjoy your talks at Gracefield. Sincerely, ...* I'd like to acknowledge the card. But I have no return address! Help, please!

In truth, a number of cards arrive at the same time, given the strange nature of the Nicaraguan mails and of my own life. I find myself answering a dozen or so notes at the same time so it really helps if you enclose return addresses on the cards.

***WESTERN CANADIANS TAKE NOTE:**

*And an aside, intended to shame the rest of the country. Why is it that for every card from the rest of Canada I receive a dozen from the Maritimes? It's true! I know that people in the rest of Canada are praying for me, and, more importantly, for the wonderful people with whom I work. But Maritimers are special in their letter-writing.

All the best,
Joe Reed

Adele Halliday
Komathai, Kenya

Hello, and warm greetings to you, my sisters, brothers, and dear friends. Right now, my teaching responsibilities at the special school have temporarily halted as our school has closed for the holidays. The school year runs differently from that at home, and most schools close for the entire month of December. The school year begins again with a new year and a new term in January - and over the past few weeks, students have been busily preparing for, and writing their examinations which signify their completion of either primary school (KCPE - Kenya Certificate of Primary Education) or secondary school (KCSE).

The new millennium will bring for most schools a new set of students. For us at the Komothai Special School, there are no students leaving, and no new ones coming. We are completely full and cannot accommodate any more students, even though the waiting list is very long. The main problem is lack of money and of staff.

The school cannot afford to hire any more teachers, and several more are needed to keep the student-teacher ratio low. Many people do not want to teach special students, and indeed, formalized training for people who would like to teach special education in Kenya is only a few years old.

The other staffing challenge is finding people to stay and take care of the students. Komothai is a boarding school, so the students live in the dormitories on-site (directly beside my house). However, since some of the students cannot dress, feed themselves, or properly go to the toilet, these care-giving responsibilities fall to the housemothers or the caregivers (there are three), who take care of the physical needs of the children.

Their work is hard and long, and is a 24-hour responsibility. Cleaning up clothes after a child has soiled him or herself, or wiping drool from faces, or helping feed small ones, is no easy task, and is a job that many people do not desire, no matter what their financial situation is. So, for a variety of reasons, Komothai will stay with its current 35 students for some time.

Since our school has closed for the holidays, I have been enjoying time with people. Kenyans love visitors, and I have been to so many homes that I am beginning to lose track of where I have been. I often end up cooking with the women (there are no men in the kitchen) and preparing Kenyan and Kikuyu foods. And as we gather water and cook over fires and chop vegetables, we talk about life and love and politics and poverty in Kenya, and things around the world. People have been openly and honestly sharing with me, and I with them, so our conversations are amazing learning opportunities for both of us, as we explore the similarities and differences between Kenya and Canada. I have formed some very strong friendships and relationships in Kenya, and have truly been enjoying the company of others, without worrying about rushing back home to prepare a lesson plan and for another school day.

Amidst the school closing and the cooking and the advent of the Christmas season, a few other things have been happening. The rains have begun.

In the weeks leading up to the regular rains, the air had been ripe with anticipation, as people waited for the rains to begin. In fact, even the ground had been in wait: the soils had been tilled and were ready for the seeds to be planted once the water came.

The rains were late this year, and as people waited for the rains to nourish their crops, anxieties increased. People worried about drought and hunger and some in my community were thinking of holding prayer meetings to pray for the rains. But, at long last, the rains arrived and there was much rejoicing in the land.

Since the start of the rains, I have watched the land being transformed. The striking red soil is disappearing and is being covered with a green mat of growth which will provide food and nourishment for the months ahead. The days normally dawn clear and bright, and the sun is warm on my face as I walk through the hills and valleys, and along the soil which cradles and holds the growing food.

I am ever so painfully aware that there are many in Kenya who have not received any relief. There are possibly five million Kenyans threatened by famine, especially those in arid and semi-arid regions.

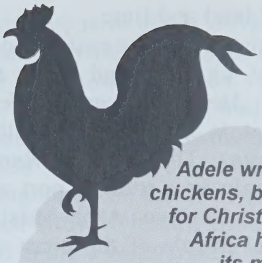
In a time when parts of the country are overwhelmed with food, there are other parts where people are starving. In fact, people are dying from hunger. Relief food (mostly boiled maize) is available, but is often not getting to those who need it most because of long distances, difficult road conditions, and few telephone services. Sadly, there is even the theft and re-sale of the relief food which financially profits a few people at the expense of many others -- even to the point of death.

Each day when we take our food, we thank God for the gift of rain to the lands. Yet, I continue to mourn and grieve for those who have no physical nourishment, and I pray for relief food for them.

The soils in this part of Kenya are red, not just any ordinary red, but a brilliant, bright rusty-red. I am constantly amazed with the striking picture this soil makes across the country. It is fitting that this very red soil should bring one to a realization.

At 5:30 in the morning, I found myself doing my hand-washing, watching a glorious sunrise brighten the day, singing, laughing, praising, and rejoicing once again in the beauty of God's creation. All around me, I could hear the sounds of a community awakening and beginning the day. It was such a peaceful, beautiful moment.

At one point, I stopped singing and concentrated all of my efforts on washing. I was scrubbing at a particularly stubborn spot of soil on my sock. With some frustration, I scrubbed, I rubbed, I bleached, and I scrubbed some more. No luck, and no change. Those red smears were not coming out anytime soon. My clothes had been marked.



Adele writes of friendly chickens, barbequed goat for Christmas, and how Africa has already left its mark on her - in more ways than one.

Through my haze of frustration, I realized that already, in three months, Africa has marked me, just like my sock. The people, the sights, the sounds, the culture, the land - they have all made their mark, and I know that I will never be the same again.

The stain on my sock. The mark on my person. Neither would have escaped Kenya the same as when they entered. So while I have resigned myself to the fact that I have lost one item of clothing to the land, I rejoice that already the land and the people have given me so much more. I know that when I finally do return home, it will be with a difference that will not be easily bleached or scrubbed away. Thanks be to God for amazing changes and transformations! And thanks be to God for rains and for red soils.

The coast, the contrasts, and Christmas....

Kenya is a land of drastic contrasts. Contrasts between rich and poor, among ethnic groups, and ways of life. Kenya, however, with 42 different ethnic groups, great variation in land and climatic conditions, experiences many contrasts and differences in a relatively

small space of land and time.

I spent some time on the eastern coast of the country, on an island along the Indian Ocean. Here, the way of life is preserved as it is in almost no other region in Kenya. The coast of Kenya developed mainly as a trading port and has a very distinctive Arab-Muslim influence. The people of the coast are the Swahili, and from here, the current national language evolved to being what it is today. The current Kiswahili language bears witness to the historical influence of the coast and trading so the current language uses words from Portuguese, Hindi, Arabic, and English.

Life on the coast is unhurried. Somehow, the town of Lamu has managed to escape modern-day and western pressures, and influences to change. It is Kenya's oldest living town and hasn't changed much in appearance or character over the many years. There is only one car on the entire island, and it is owned by the district commissioner.

Everyone either travels by foot, donkey, or *dhow* - a type of sailing boat. (I did travel by donkey once, but the donkey was a bit wild and had a mind of its own. Even so, I managed to reach my final destination intact. But, riding a horse and riding a donkey are definitely not the same!)

Lamu is almost exclusively Muslim. We arrived right in time to celebrate Ramadan with our new friends. Our first night we sang Swahili songs on a dhow and rejoiced together at the first sight of the crescent moon, the official beginning of the holy month.

The streets of the town are very narrow. The only things that can fit through the alleyways are people and donkeys. The donkeys are marked with their owners' names, and when they are not working, carrying people, or cargo, they wander freely along the streets. The ruins of ancient Swahili civilizations are found around, and one can only imagine what life was like hundreds of years ago!

Like my up-country living, the pace of life is slower, unhurried, and simple. But the activities are different. People fished, swam, fasted, and rested. In Lamu, the 'land of sunshine', people spoke a pure Kiswahili, not a mix as they do in other parts of the country. In Lamu, people said "Hakuna matata" ("no worries")! I am still trying to figure out if the people say it because of the influence of the Disney movie 'The Lion King' or if the movie copied it from the people.

There, I was truly recognized as a foreigner who was not from Kenya. This was partially because it was a small town where everyone knew each other, but also, because I really didn't look like the people of Lamu (whereas most people accept me as looking very much like a Kikuyu).

Historically, intermarriage among the Arabs and the Africans was common, and the current day cost bears witness to this mixing. So, my appearance, my stuttering Kiswahili, and the fact that I didn't dress like a traditional Muslim woman in black wraparound *buibui* quickly set me apart from the people of the coast.

I spent Christmas in my community, with a family who have come to adopt me as their "other" daughter. It was amazing to spend Christmas not surrounded by commercialism and consumerism.

Christmas morning I spent in church, and the choir director has discovered that I can play the piano, so I was surprised by being asked to play Christmas carols - on the spot! It was interesting, because I had always wondered why the piano (organ) and the congregation were never

Prayer Requests

Taiwan

1. Pray for the people of Taiwan and the church as they direct the recovery and development of earthquake-devastated areas.
2. Pray for the outreach of Changhua hospital to the needy in central Taiwan.
3. Pray that the hospital will meet accreditation standards needed for nine years in order to become permanent.

Kenya

1. Pray for the teachers and caregivers in the Komathai School that they may have strength and patience.
2. Pray for Adele Halliday's continuing ability to bless the community in which she works, and for Africa to imprint itself on her in positive ways.

Malawi

1. Pray for Bruce Hickling and Jonathan Sherbino as they recover from the shock of their car accident in February.

Central America

1. Pray for continued perseverance for the students at the Francisco Coll School.
2. Pray for understanding and reconciliation in the Fraternity of Evangelical Churches (FIEC) of Costa Rica.

India/Nepal

1. Pray for energy and good health for Margaret Vanderzweerde as she returns to her work in Nepal and India.

really together and now I have discovered why by experiencing it - the English words and Kikuyu words do not fit in the same musical beat, the Kikuyu takes much longer to sing. So, some people are usually a line or two behind. Playing to two different paces of singing and words is particularly difficult, especially when playing on the spur of the moment, but somehow it worked.

Turkey is not at all traditional here for Christmas dinner. Instead, goats are fattened up the week before Christmas, slaughtered on the 25th and roasted over open fires. 'Nyama choma' it is called, and being a vegetarian, I didn't feast on it like everyone else. The family I was with didn't actually slaughter their goat, but got half a goat from someone else and roasted it. It was like having a BBQ in December!

They wanted to slaughter their chicken, but it had so much character that we decided not to. The chicken is hilarious. It is lonely because it doesn't have a mate, so I think it has gone a little bit crazy - it eats meat (in fact, it was trying to get its beak on the 'nyama choma'), and wanders around looking for people because it doesn't like being alone. It zipped into the house when no one was looking, and generally gets harassed by the cows who were grazing on the now green grass.

In fact, the animals of the yard joined us for the Christmas dinner outside -- the cows, the goats (who were next door making their presence known by sound), the crazy chicken, the cats, and of course, the humans. It was a celebration with the creatures of God's glorious creation, and it was, indeed, good.

Peace and love,
Adele

Richard & Ling Schwarz
Nepal

September 1999 - "Mommy, I don't like myself." "Why is that Daniel?" "Because I want to do good things but I do bad

things." This after getting into trouble twice for bothering his sister. Pauline theology from a four-year-old.

We can well relate to our son's dilemma. Getting irritated in the OR when staff come in late or don't do their work. Being short with people trying to curry favour with us. Being impatient with the electrician who promised two months ago he would have our light fixed within two days. I suppose these sorts of problems are common to us all.

Sometimes I find it hard to believe that Paul really did struggle with doing bad when he wanted to do good - he seems so perfect when we read about him. Yet, it is reassuring to know that he did have the same battle, and found release in the same source. "Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Life is much more settled. I am doing more cleft lips and palates lately. I recently met a 13-year-old girl who still had a cleft lip. She was very shy and kept her face covered at all times, and had endured much teasing. After surgery, she turned out to be quite a good looking girl, feeling much better about herself, and able to marry in the future. This was possible only through donated funds, which I can use to help really needy people.

I am teaching a young Nepali surgeon plastic surgery now. I continue teaching our two GP residents as well as working with three other junior surgeons. We are getting a skin mesher this week, purchased with money given by a friend. This will make the treatment of burns so-o-o much easier.

We received our visa extension until December 2000. Many others in our mission are still facing difficulties, and some are either unable to return to Nepal or can't leave the country due to the lack of a visa. There have been some pretty ridiculous, although serious, charges lodged against some of them. Bizarre anti-Christian propaganda still makes front-page news.

The kids are all fine. Jon and Daniel love school. They both love books and Jon is reading now. Christina is very skilled at destroying any paper objects but is a real joy to us.

Ling is teaching regularly at Sunday School, and running the medical clinic for the mission. She still feels the pressure of juggling work and family.

[Ling and Richard go on to talk about a very core institution in Nepali society, the prerogative of status. Roles and privileges are fixed at birth and can only be changed by connections. They say:]

...one can start to see the disruption that the gospel could bring - equality, love to all, being one in the family. And yet what a radical freedom and joy to find that in God's eyes you are considered the equal of anyone. Equally undeserving of God's grace yet equally loved and received into His kingdom; radical. This is the message we try to live and bring.

Your brother and sister in the family,
Richard &Ling

Joy Randall
Taiwan

December 1999 - I have been on deputation in Canada since August but wanted to share a few concerns and needs of these past few months.

The 921 earthquake that hit Taiwan caused a lot of major damage, particularly in the central part. Since that area is near Changhua I was most concerned for the hospital, our staff and their families. The hospital was not damaged very

much. It was the rescue centre for the church. MacKay Hospital and Sin Lau Hospital from the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT) sent teams to help. Our Community Health Department was still working in the actual centre, ChiChi until the end of November.

The PCT and others feel it will take at least 45 years to help restore these areas. Everyone is thankful for the many prayers and the donations through PWS&D and other organizations.

I spent six weeks in BC and Alberta visiting various churches and sharing with warm and interested people. The remainder of my deputation was in Ontario, not too far from home (Toronto area). St. Andrew's, Cobourg and WMS had a special celebration for my 30 years service to Taiwan.

Our hospital will be having accreditation for medical centre status in January 2000.

Our Skin Graft with Love Foundation has now been given government approval. I am on the board and pray we can do more outreach to the people in central Taiwan.

Thank you for your continuing prayers for my health and my work, and your support.

Yours in His love,
Joy

Joy returned to Taiwan in January 2000.

NEWS FROM MALAWI: Jonathan Sherbino and Bruce Hickling, a volunteer serving with Livingstonia Synod, CCAP Malawi, were in a traffic accident early in February. Both men were on the main road from Mzuzu to Ekwendi. Bruce, who was driving, swerved to avoid a cyclist and lost control. The vehicle overturned. Bruce had to have a few stitches to the back of his head and spent the night in the hospital. Jonathan was unhurt according to the report of the church's General Secretary.

More news from Jonathan in the next issue.

MISSION STUDY NEWS

Cuban pastor, Carlos Piedra writes of Cuban youth:

The Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy (I Timothy 4:13): "While I am away, be busy with reading, exhortation, and teaching...."

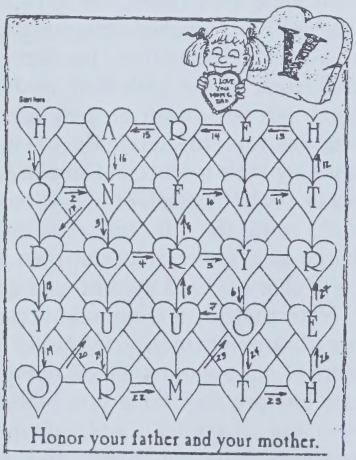
In these past years, we have seen the youth of our churches struggling to obtain an adequate education, to deepen their knowledge of the faith they profess. This search has been motivated by the need to find answers to hundreds of questions raised by their friends and sometimes even by our youth themselves. Questions having to do with the life and mission of the church in a society like our own and in a world characterized by profound changes.

Nevertheless, this attitude is not widespread among many religious groups. Some of our youth base their opinions on a poor interpretation of a few biblical texts taken out of context, and set up a false dichotomy between "piety" and a serious attempt to probe the texts deeply. They end up setting religion against science; the divine against the human; the material against the spiritual.

The church, for any number of historic reasons, has felt the need to change her program and devote time to things which, erroneously, she did not feel were any of her business. We spent much time in parlour games which proved our familiarity with the Bible, "Bible Baseball" in which we learned to quote passages and identify players. But these days have been left behind.

The church is no longer a refuge to which we turn to escape for awhile the problems of women and men in today's world. Even less is it a psychiatric hospital in which a kind of catharsis is administered to remove us from our present reality. Our meetings should not be concerts of old hymns sung to new music or of modern songs sung to old hymn tunes.

The youth have raised the questions, the issues. We hope that they will spread throughout the church. And to the whole church falls the responsibility to which Paul refers: "While I am away, be busy with reading, exhortation, and teaching...."



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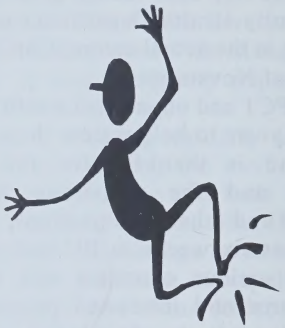

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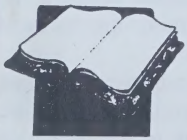


Does your organization need educational materials, Christian literature, professional journals, religious periodicals or Bibles? Does your budget not meet this need?

You should apply to the CHRISTIAN LITERATURE FUND of the WMS for some financial assistance. The following groups have received help from this fund:

Guatemala: materials and scholarships for Mayan pastors

Canada: educational materials for Flora House, Winnipeg

PRICE INCREASE

Life Membership Pins: $55.00

Honorary Life Membership: 90.00

(Both include GST and postage.)

Mozambique Relief

Photo: Action by Churches Together

The sounds of people talking, babies crying, and pots clattering fill the halls of a former cashew nut processing factory. Helena sits together with her children and a friend, nursing her newborn baby. The floods destroyed her house, and for three weeks she has been living in the factory with her husband, brothers, and children. " I go home every day, because I miss my house and my neighbors," Helena explains. "But we cannot rebuild our house there, it is too dangerous. We need a secure place so we will not be afraid of sleeping at night, waiting to be flooded".

You can help provide food, shelter and potable water to the victims of the floods in Mozambique. PWS&D is working with the Presbyterian Church of Mozambique and Action by Churches Together to help people like Helena find safe places to rebuild homes, rehabilitate farmland and restart small businesses.

Presbyterian World Service & Development

50 Wynford Dr. Toronto, ON M3C 1J7 tel: 416-441-1111 or 1-800-619-7301

email: pwsd@presbyterian.ca web: www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd

Working together, we can make a difference

IN THE SOCIETY

PRESBYTERIAL

The 86th Annual Meeting of **London** Presbyterial was held at Knox, St. Thomas on January 20. The theme was *Year 2000 - Introduction to Jubilee.*

Following a singalong with Muriel Stavert and Mildred Greig at the piano, president Jean Stewart constituted the meeting. Rev. Dr. Andrew Human, minister of Knox, welcome everyone and commended the WMS on the work they do. North Caradoc St. Andrew's women gave the devotions and in memoriams. Area staff, Erin Crisfield, conducted the Bible study.

Following lunch Muriel Stavert introduced head table guests. Speaker was Gail Turner, Assistant Justice Program Ministry, PCC.

The meeting was closed with the celebration of communion with Rev. A. Human and session of Knox.

Equipped to Serve was the theme for **Maitland** Presbyterial Annual Meeting held in St. Andrew's, Wingham on January 17, 2000. President Shirley McCall welcomed about 64 members and opened with prayer. Rev Pearl Vasarhelyi from Holstein brought greetings from Presbytery.

Elizabeth Arbuckle introduced Eleanor Ward, retired school teacher from Wingham who works with Unevangelized Field Mission (UFM) in Cuba. She shared her experiences with people in places such as Santiago de Cuba and La Habana.

In memoriam was shared by Belgrave. Norma Raynard, Lucknow reviewed books available from The Book Room.

Rev. John Vaudry welcomed everyone and said grace before a soup and sandwich lunch.

The afternoon session was taken up with reports. Lauralee Cayley and Eileen Chambers shared a dialogue about CGIT in reference to Jamboree 2000.

Officers were installed by Rev. Catherine Campbell of Brussels and Belgrave.

Area staff Erin Crisfield, led in worship "Equipped to Serve" with scripture from Jeremiah and John. The service ended with a handwashing ceremony to represent the foot washing of the disciples by Jesus.

The Annual Meeting of **Lindsay** Presbyterial was held at Bolsover, January 26. President Linda Grace, presided over the business in the morning session. Wick Presbyterian Women presented an uplifting worship service on the theme of the new year, addressing faith, hope and love.

Rev. Dawn Griffiths installed the officers for 2000. An *In Memoriam* service was conducted by Woodville Presbyterian Women.

Grace Jess introduced guest speaker Stuart Gillan, speaking on Discipleship in Mission.

Linda Grace closed with the Benediction.

Executive officers of **Bruce-Grey** Presbyterial met in Knox, Walkerton on January 12 to plan the April meeting to be held in St. Paul's, Glammis.

The enthusiastic 19 members who attended represented 13 of the current 18 WMS groups in the Presbyterial. The suggested theme, *Yearning for a Home*, is reflective of our speaker Allan Thompson, who works with immigration. This also confirms our mission message, to be at "home" in God's love.

An update of Presbyterial activities and initial information regarding the 53rd Annual Meeting of the Synodical of Southwestern Ontario in April were

considered. President Kay Remus closed the meeting with prayer and thanksgiving.

On January 26, the members of St. Andrew's-Knox, Spencerville, welcomed the **Brockville** Presbyterial for their first meeting of the new millennium. Catherine Blatch, in charge of literature, had a good selection of books, cards and so on.

President Henny Donkersteeg opened the meeting with prayer. Judy Messenger of Kemptville conducted worship with Ruth Kirkwood reading Scripture.

Following business and annual reports, a Bible study led by Rev. Ian MacLean was received enthusiastically. The study was on how Jesus went among his people and how we must follow his example.

A hot lunch served by the women of St. Andrew's-Knox, was followed by a hymn sing led by Cathy Williams and Pam Silmzer.

Guest speaker for the afternoon was Karen Plater, Presbyterian World Service and Development. Karen told of her work in India, Africa and South America, and how PWS&D operates. Donna Wilson thanked Karen.

An impressive memorial service was conducted by Gloria Purcell. Rev. MacLean led in the installation of officers. Throughout the day, pianist was Francis Adams.

A New Beginning - A Call for Jubilee was the theme for the meeting of **Sarnia** Presbyterial held January 22 at Laurel Lea-St. Matthew's, Sarnia.

In a workshop "Jubilee", area staff Erin Crisfield, demonstrated how the gap between the rich and poor is widening; then compared the basic needs of a Canadian family of four living a life of dignity, with a family the same size living in a Third World country which is always in debt and is poor. Discussion included what we can do to ensure a fairer distribution of wealth in our society.

President Anna McCoskery opened the meeting with prayer. Dorothy Neal welcomed everyone to Laurel Lea-St. Andrew's and conducted an In Memoriam service. The six priorities set out by the Church were discussed.

Fleur Eenkhoorn installed the officers for 2000.

Margaret Smith had a good display of books and interesting materials. Closing devotions were given by Laurel Lea-St. Matthew's WMS with Sophie Jackson and Betty Hetherington taking part. The President closed with prayer.

Peterborough Presbyterial met January 19 at St. Andrew's, Cobourg. A gathering singalong was led by Jackie Kelly, accompanied by Helen King, on the piano.

President Joan Smith of Port Hope welcomed everyone. Rev. D. Brown brought greetings from St. Andrew's, Cobourg and invited everyone to attend the display of 48 pewter panels at the church beginning April 16. Rev. Dawn Griffiths, Moderator of Lindsay Peterborough Presbytery, brought greetings.

Worship was conducted by Mrs. Taylor of Hastings, and Mrs. King and Mrs. Carlaw of Warkworth, with scripture from Thessalonians 5:11. The theme *Mission 2000* was explained.

Sarah Ormarodd of Cobourg sang a solo accompanied by her mother on the piano. Annual reports were presented in a new format of skits and panels.

Lunch was served by the Cobourg women. At the afternoon session the "In Remembrance Service" was conducted by Marion Hay of Burnbrae.

Rev. Dawn Griffiths installed the officers for 2000 and Peggy McKay gave the courtesies. Closing meditation and communion service was conducted by Rev. Lynda

Reid, assisted by Ada Chapman, Cecilia Morris, Eleanor Reading and Lucille Sturrocks.

The 86th Annual Meeting of **Lanark & Renfrew** Presbyterial was held in Almonte on January 29, 2000 presided over by President Florence Jamieson.

The theme was *Celebrate the Jubilee.* Roll call was answered by a memory verse from the past and hope for the future.

Rev. J. Ferrier welcomed the guests and devotions were conducted by Almonte group. The Blais family sang a beautiful hymn accompanied by organist George Stewart.

Lottie Sutherland brought greetings from Synodical, conducted a Bible Study on God's promises and an impressive Remembrance Service.

A delicious smorgasbord dinner was enjoyed following reports.

Rev. Hugh Jack, Carleton Place, guest speaker, showed slides of his 1999 trip to South Korea where out of a population of forty-four million, 12 million live in Seoul.

There were no changes in the officers for 2000.

St. Andrew's, Stratford was host to the **Huron Perth** Presbyterial Annual Meeting, the theme being *Mission Not Impossible.*

President Pat White presided. Morning devotions were lead by Cranbrook members with Yvonne Knight reading verses from Luke 16, reminding us of those sent out in early days for mission; who without visas, money or tickets still accomplished their mission for God.

Rev. Andrew Fullerton welcomed everyone to St. Andrew's.

Following business, area staff Erin Crisfield conducted a workshop related to Promotion, Education and Finance.

Erin installed the officers for 2000.

The afternoon opened with a hymn sing from the new Book of Praise, led by Shirley Aitcheson with Eunice Bissett accompanying.

An In Memoriam service was conducted by Lillian Sparling and Alice Gardiner of Cromarty WMS. Ruth Hart and Jean Fryfogle presented afternoon devotions.

Jean Edmunds introduced guest speaker Elenore Ward who spent two week in Cuba last year.

Mary Scott of Knox WMS gave the courtesy remarks and Robina Alexander closed with prayer.

West Toronto Presbyterial held its 86th Annual Meeting at Coldstream Church on February 19, the theme *Called to serve with all our gifts.* President Beverley McWhinnie welcomed everyone and conducted the program. Devotions were given by Carolyn Jones.

Paul Ryu, Coordinator of The Back Door Youth Centre spoke of the work of this drop-in centre in Roncesvalles Village and of his experience helping youth reach their full potential.

An Honorary Membership was presented to Carolyn Jones by last year's recipient, June Maxwade. Moderator, Rev. Sarah Kim, brought greeting from Presbytery and later conducted the installation of officers for 2000. Greeting were brought by Giollo Kelly for East Toronto Presbyterial and Council Executive, and by June Campbell, Synodical President.

Rev. Allen Lane of Coldstream welcomed everyone and women of the "Laurie Palmer Gloup served lunch. Following this, guest speaker, Rev. Lynda Reid, area staff shared some of her experiences during a recent trip to Brazil.

New president, Carolyn Jones, closed the meeting with prayer.

LOCAL

Life memberships were presented to Mary Beazley and Vera Cline by Jessie Laudon

and Barbara Petticrew, President and Treasurer of **St. John's** WMS, **White Rock**, BC.

The "Fanning the Flames" quilt, above, was designed and made by Phyllis MacFarland, a member of the church.

At the Christmas meeting of **Glenview** WMS, **Toronto**, a Life Membership Certificate and pin was presented to Janice Fourney by Marion Partridge. The certificate and pin was a bequest from a former member, Isobel Farquhar.

The WMS of Glenview Church, Toronto lost a faithful member in the passing of **Ferne Anderson** on January 26 in her 95th year.

In former years Ferne was well known in Glenview for her skill in organizing wonderful church suppers. Ferne had an outgoing, happy disposition and a strong Christian faith. We give thanks to God for her life and example.

Photo, right, was taken at the December meeting of **Knox, Glenarm** Presbyterian Women. Left to right are: Florence Jamieson, Shirley Abernathy, Anita McLennan, Betty Griffith and Grace Jess.

Shirley and Betty were presented with Life Memberships by Florence and Grace on behalf of the Group.

Mrs. **Wilma Ledgerwood**, **St. Paul's, Winchester**, Ontario died Sunday January 30, 2000 at the age of 85. She held executive offices at local, Brockville Presbyterial and the Synodical of Quebec and Eastern Ontario levels. She was on the first Synodical of Quebec and Eastern Ontario Executive in 1944.

Kathleen Anderson Rowat of **Westmount**, Quebec died on June 20, 1999 in her 94th year. She served in various executive roles including President of the Montreal Presbyterial at the 100th Anniversary of the WMS in Montreal.

Kathleen was gifted musically, and wrote poetry. One of her poems was published in the 1992 June/July Glad Tidings. A hymn of hers is in the 1997 Book of Praise, #723: Lord in this broken world.

Kathleen's unwavering faith was an inspiration to all who knew her.

On November 4, 1999 **Smithville** Presbyterian Church, Smithville, Ontario held a pot luck supper to honour Rev. Frank DeVries for 35 years in the ministry. Rev. DeVries shared memories of experiences in various congregations throughout Canada. He was presented with a commemorative clock.

Shown above are Rev. David and Mrs. Miriam Barrie, missionaries to Malawi, who were guest speakers at a recent Mission Sunday service at **St. Andrew's, Welland**.

On the left is Rev. Ron Sharpe, minister of St. Andrew's and on the far right is Evelyn McKenney, mission convenor for the Women's Association.

On December 21, 1999 the **Ferne Blair** WMS formally disbanded after 55 years of faithful service. The group was formed with 14 members in September 1944, as the Young Women's Auxiliary, in honour of Miss Ferne I. Blair, RN, a former active member of the group and daughter of Mrs. Wm Blair of our congregation.

Ferne began overseas missionary work in 1949 with the China Inland Mission, later know as the Overseas Missionary Fellowship in Malaysia. Now retired, Ferne lives in Abbotsford, BC.

On Sunday, February 13, 2000, at the morning worship service of **First Church, Collingwood**, a Celebration of the Ferne Blair WMS recognized our achievement of 55 years. Our only active charter member, Mrs. Isabelle Adams, gave a brief history of the group; secretary Mrs. Joan Laughlin, read the scripture; senior minister, Rev. John Henderson, conducted a WMS Closure Service.

CIRCULATION NEWS

Katherine Allen
Circulation Manager

This is the time of year when we begin updating our list of Glad Tidings secretaries/contact persons. If your group has elected a new one, please forward us this information by the beginning of July. We want to ensure that the summer mailing is mailed to the proper source. It is helpful to have this information in case we need to contact the group during the year. Please include the name of the congregation and the group number when corresponding. The group number can be found on your label on the magazine or the Glad Tidings subscription list under the column "Congre".

Over the past few years we have asked subscribers to make sure that there is a box number or street address on the label of your magazine. Please check your address on the label and if this part of the address is missing, we would appreciate receiving this information immediately.

Do you know of someone who has trouble reading the Glad Tidings in regular sized print? The magazine is also available in large print at a cost of $10.00 per year. An Audio cassette tape is free of charge but if a person wishes to contribute, the amount of $10.00 is suggested. When requesting the cassette tape you need to indicate whether the cassette is to be sent in a non-returnable envelope or returnable pouch.

Katherine Allen, Circulation Manager

Patricia S. Angus of **Eckville, Alberta**, was born in Vancouver on November 7, 1926. She died in the Red Deer (Alberta) Hospital on February 3, 2000.

Pat was a member of St. Paul's Church and a member of the Ladies' Evening Group. We will all miss her, but know she is at peace with her God.

Margaret Gray Kerr died January 20, 2000 at the Guelph General Hospital after a brief illness, in her 88th year.

Miss Kerr, a recent resident of Stone Lodge, worked for many years at Cedarvale School for Girls, Georgetown and Ewart College, Toronto. She was a member of Duff's Church, Pushlinch and was active in the WMS, the Women's Institute, the Agricultural Society and the Red Cross Society. She was a faithful member of the Senior's Centre Silverstones.

A tree will be planted in memory of Margaret in the Memorial Forest, University of Guelph, Arboretum.

Winnifred Mae Williams passed away October 19, 1999. Win was a faithful member of long standing at Whalley Presbyterian, Surrey, B. C. and in the past was a CGIT leader and secretary for the WMS Afternoon Guild.

She was an avid gardener, her superb rose blooms decorated many event tables. Win was always generous with her beautiful craft work and baking for annual bazaars.

A service of remembrance was held Saturday October 23, 1999. Surviving Win are husband Willie, son Bill, daughters Beth and Cathy and her beloved grandchildren.

(Apologies to the Whalley WMS Afternoon Guild for not publishing the above sooner. There was no record of having received it earlier. It may have been lost or misplaced.)

IN REMEMBRANCE

Olive Currie
Beechwood & Ailsa Craig, ON

Mrs. Ruby Steiss
Melville, Brussels, ON

Jean Foulds
St. John's, Cornwall, ON

Mrs. Gladys McMurchy
Argyle, Crinan, On

Mrs. Evelyn Leef
Knox, Dunnville, ON

Patricia S. Angus
St. Paul's, Eckville, AB

Mrs. Wilma E. Gilbertson
Eden Mills, ON

Mrs. Janet Mitchell
Mrs. Alice Robinson
Glencoe, ON

Mrs. Dorothy Gordon
St. Columba, Hamilton, ON

Mrs. Ruby Edgington
St.Andrew's, Hanover, ON
(formerly Duff's, Puslinch, ON)

Helen M. Dickson
St. Andrew's, Kitchener, ON

Mrs. Adeline Thomson
Knox, Milton, ON

Mrs. Mary Brown
Moncton, ON

Mrs. Gordon (Merron) Coutts
St. Andrew's, Mount Forest, ON
(formerly of Knox, Conn, ON)

Sarah E. Marshall
Knox, Normanby, ON

Rev. Wilfred Moncrieff, Peterborough, ON (Life Member WMS, given to him at Westminster, Sault St. Marie, ON)

Miss Elsie Tait
St. Andrew's Memorial, Port Credit, ON

Mrs. Greta Eby
Port Elgin, ON

Mrs. Vera Drummond
Tolmie Memorial, Port Elgin, ON

Miss Margaret Kerr
Duff's, Puslinch, ON

Mary Armstrong
Drew Boyington
Richmond Hill, ON

Miss Mary McDermid
Mrs. Ella Rumble
Jubilee, Stayner, ON

Mrs. Dora Coles
St. Marys, ON

Winnifred Mae Williams
Whalley, Surrey, BC

Mrs. Frances Campbell
Mrs. Maudie Johnston,
Lakeview, Thunder Bay, ON

Mrs Ida McAdam,
Mrs. Gladys Anderson
(formerly of Ewart College)
Glebe, Toronto, ON

Mrs. Ferne Anderson
Glenview, Toronto, ON

Miss May Agnew
St. Andrew's, Victoria, BC

Kathleen Anderson Rowat
Westmount, Quebec

Mrs. Wilma Ledgerwood
St. Paul's, Winchester, ON

Multiplied Minutes

THE LITTLE LOAVES AND FISHES

OF OUR DAYS,

WE BREAK, WITH GRATITUDE AND PRAISE,

AND GIVE TO OTHERS,

WHO ARE FED,

WITH LIFE-SUSTAINING JESUS-BREAD,

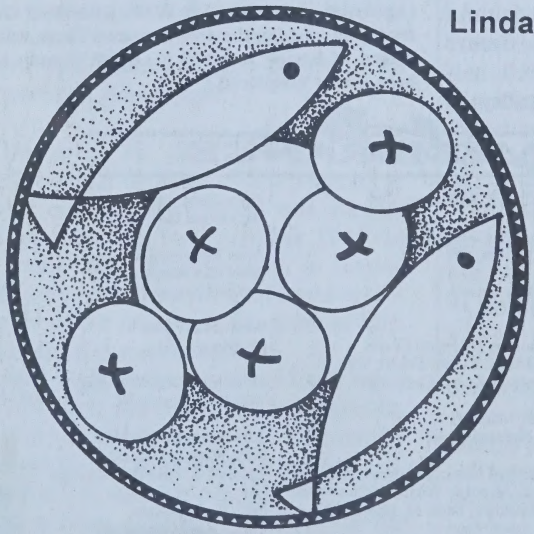
FRAGMENTS GATHERED, BASKETS FULL,

BROKENESS LEAVES EXTRA-MORE -

AND SO, WE BOW BEFORE HIM,

AND ADORE.

Linda Neff



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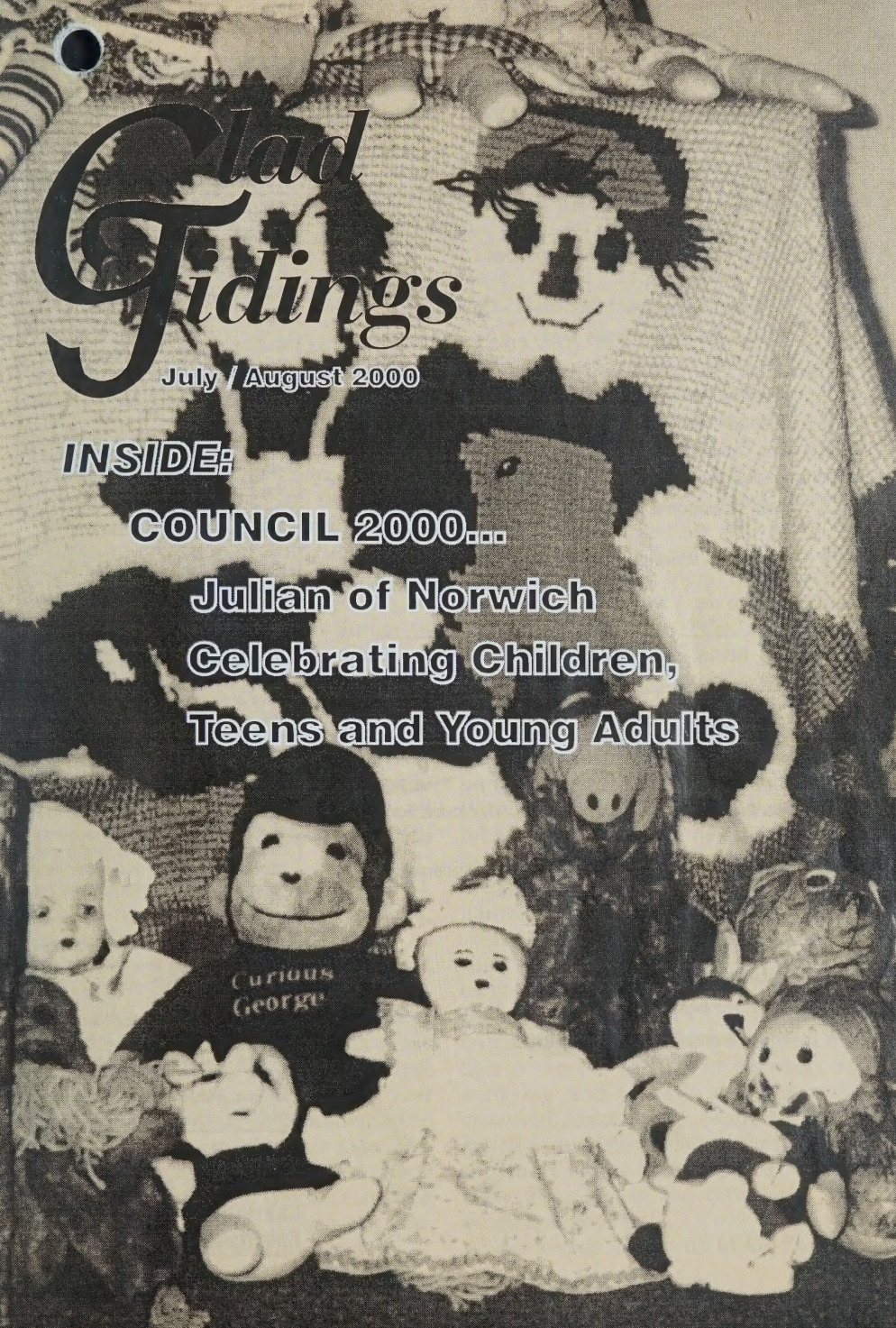
Glad Tidings

July / August 2000



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COUNCIL 2000...

Julian of Norwich

Celebrating Children, Teens and Young Adults

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Glad Tidings

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GLAD TIDINGS reports on aspects of the Women's Missionary Society on all levels.

GLAD TIDINGS challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally and internationally.

GLAD TIDINGS through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired and motivated to action.

GLAD TIDINGS provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS (WD) or by the Editor.

Council Photos Cover, pp 9,12-13,17,24-25: Katherine Allen, Charlotte Brown, Margaret Robertson, June Stevenson.

Julian of Norwich

Fifth in a series of articles on early women who influenced Christian thought.

by Maria Stam

In recent times the female role within the Christian Church has been taken more seriously. There is a new realization that through the centuries women had played an important part in the development of Christian culture. Especially, the mystics of the middle ages provided the world with a deeper insight into matters of faith, which had practical as well as doctrinal implications.

One of these women was Julian of Norwich, born in 1342 (the place of birth as well as her given name is not known). Her life was less exciting than that of the previous three mystics in this series; she lived as a recluse. Her only direct contact with the outside world was a small window in her cell from where she comforted and guided suffering people.

Julian got her name from the St. Julian Church in Conisford, Norwich, England, where she had lived as anchoress - a word derived from Greek meaning "withdrawn from the world". Anchorites were appointed by the local bishop and supported by the alms of the parish community. Julian is first mentioned as anchoress in 1393. What year she came to Norwich is unknown. The theory is that she might have married a Norwich merchant who had died in one of the outbreaks of the Black Death that ravaged communities during the second half of the fourteenth century.

The only available certainty of her life is the recording of her visions, which she called "Showings." The 16 revelations came to her in her thirty-first year on May 13, 1373 while she was seriously ill. Miraculously cured, she slowly tried to understand the meaning of the visions and spent the next twenty years meditating on them. First she recorded them in "the short text" which she then rewrote, expanded, and edited into "the long text," known as "The Revelation of Divine Love". It was the first book written by a woman in the English language, which is still now considered a classic of spiritual literature. Her writings point to a profound knowledge of the Latin Vulgate text (translation of the bible in Latin) and of the spiritual writings of the monastic tradition of the Western Church. Where and how she gained her knowledge is unknown.

Julian claims and comforts with 'All shall be well'. However, Julian makes clear that 'All shall be well' is not a promise to relieve us of pain in our lives. Its meaning lies in the redemptive power of the union between our suffering and Christ's suffering. The crucified Jesus is the central point of Julian's revelation. When her visions showed Christ's bleeding and tortured body hanging on the cross, she was overcome with pain.

Her words assure us of God's love:

"I saw that God rejoices that He is our father, and God rejoices that He is our mother, and God rejoices that He is our very husband, and our soul His beloved wife. And Christ rejoices that He is our brother and Jesus rejoices that He is our saviour. These are five great joys, as I see it, which He wills us to delight in - praising Him, loving Him, thanking Him and blessing Him for ever." (Enfolding Love, page 33)

In the fifth chapter of the long text, she again comforts us: "I saw that the Lord is to us everything which is good and comforting for our help. He is our clothing who wraps and enfolds us for love, embraces and shelters us, surrounds us for his love, which is so tender that He may never desert us". And at another point in the sixth chapter she says: "... for our natural will is to have God, and God's good will is to have us, and we can never stop willing or loving until we possess Him in the fullness of joy".

Julian tells us that prayer is pleasing to the Lord. In the fourteenth revelation (chapter forty-one) she says: "Our Lord is most glad and joyful because of our prayer; He expects it, and He wants to have it...for He says: Pray wholeheartedly, though it seems this has no savour for you; still it is profitable enough, though you may not feel that".

Her writings fill us with confidence and trust. The fourteenth century was marked by aggression, insecurity and change similar to our days. That is why her words "All shall be well" are as comforting now as they were then. The modern world tells of self-esteem and self-satisfaction, but Julian teaches that we should accept our human condition and our affliction with desires and sin. She asked us not to look for pains and penance since life itself is filled with them. When we try to accept suffering gracefully, we are united with Jesus.

Even though Julian was living in a narrow cell, she encircled the whole world with her prayers and writings. We can appreciate that she recorded her visions, so that we after nearly six hundred years can draw from her wisdom. Her writings have been translated into modern English and many scholars continue to study her revelations and admire her gift of transcribing them.

There is no certainty about the time of her death; it is known that she died quite old around 1415 or 16. The discovery of a book by Margery Kempe written in the fifteenth century, describing a visit to the elderly Julian in her cell around that time, provides another historical account of her existence.

On May 8, 1980 Mother Julian was commemorated as a saint in the Church of England. Julian's Cell, adjoining St. Julian's Church, situated off St. Julian's Alley south of Norwich Cathedral, is visited by many tourists and admirers.

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- Maria Stam is a freelance writer from London, ON. She is the author of several books, numerous articles and poems.

Blue Jay

Broken-necked blue jay
one wing torn
twisted and stiff on the brown dirt

Soft and fragile
the wing feathers fanned out
black-white bars beside a brilliant blue.

I coloured one once
on a buzzing summer afternoon
the hot wax melting and sticking,
as I followed instructions,
"Deep violet back and crest,
Dark nape above a buffy breast."

Cocky, handsome jay
You pleased me well enough that day
but my young mind had questions:

Could real birds be so beautiful?

The answer at my feet
now lay,
with startling intensity of hue

exquisite design,
possessing my view
dazzling my unbelieving eyes.

Though silent and still
here, the Original,
brings a child of God to ponder and glimpse
Creation's true magnificence.

Martie Dorland

Photo: L. June Stevenson

Bright Colours and Smiles of Hope

by Mary Lou Johnston

I didn't know what to expect. Kennis Kim, our guide, had said that we would first meet the board of the Fraternidad in the morning and then see some of their projects. This sounded pretty formidable and masculine. It was anything but that.

We arrived at a standard cement block office building in the centre of the town of Quetzaltenango, Guatemala. There was indeed a large board meeting table but around it a group of about twelve women was gathering. They were both young and old but all in the very colourful traditional blouses and skirts of the Mayan women. An agenda and soft drinks appeared and the usual introductions around the table began. These women represented eight different presbyterials and at least five different Mayan languages. In fact, sometimes their self-descriptions had to be translated from, for example, the Quiche language, into Spanish and then into English.

La Fraternidad de Presbiteriales Mayas is a gathering of 3,000 Mayan women, an organization of 76 groups of church women and base communities, "a collective which affirms the identity of Mayan women in the church and through a contextual reading of the Bible, promotes education for women and responds to the needs arising from conditions of poverty, with small development projects." This is their definition, but put into the background and history of their country their organization is nothing short of a miracle, and to see it in action is a very moving experience.

Guatemala has had a 36-year war, until recently when some peace accords were signed. Since the rebels were demanding a more just distribution of land among other things, many indigenous groups and villages (Mayan) were targeted by the army, suspecting the people of supporting the rebels. Whole villages fled into the hills. Many were not so lucky; some villagers were killed.

As in several Latin American countries, a minority elite controls 80% of the wealth and land, and of course the army. The flat land is in coffee plantations for export. A result of the conflict is that today many Mayan widows and orphans live in the mountain villages with little access to education. No school buses here. And this is a country of mountains! Mayan farmers cover every available steep slope with fields of corn and beans. Driving in a car is a luxury but still an exhausting experience because of the continuous turns. The Mayans must walk up and down those slopes to plant anything. And there is a tradition of 'machismo' or oppression by males in both the Spanish and Mayan culture. Mayan women thus are at the bottom of the society, poor and oppressed.

So when one of the founding members of the Fraternidad read the Bible at our meeting and we learned that until recently she was illiterate, we were moved. This thirst for knowledge among the women has resulted in leadership workshops, as well as seminars on themes such as contextual theology, administration and Mayan spirituality.

At learning centres, the members learn about health and nutrition, the dignity

of w[illegible]n and other rights. This is not light stuff. At one point in the translation for us English speakers, Kennis, in her translation from Spanish, could not understand why one woman was talking about fish (pesca in Spanish) until it was revealed that they were talking about the purpose of the church: Proclamation, Education, Service, Communion, Adoration - an acronym they had learned in a workshop (PESCA)!

In the area of social service, the Fraternidad improves the economic opportunities of women through development of small local projects in farming and traditional handicrafts. This is what we saw after the meeting. At Xecam Cantel, a nearby village, a qualified instructor in both hand and sewing machine embroidery was teaching the skills to a small group of women in someone's home. Six sewing machines had been provided for the course and when finished, the women could make garments for sale with the local traditional designs. Their babies and small children were with them and they are very pleased to be part of this project. Another group farther north has learned to weave the traditional multi-coloured cloth which has become a famous product of Guatemala.

Our second project began with a meeting in a church. Eglesia Evangelica Presbiteriales, in the nearby town of Cantel, where this group of women in extremely colourful dresses, also accompanied by their babies, explained enthusiastically how they acquired some land and were able to grow vegetables - cabbages and onions. We drove to see the area, not that close to their homes, but in a rich valley, benefiting from irrigation, where all around on the hills is nothing but dryness until the rains come. In other agricultural projects, they breed cattle, pigs, and grow bananas and corn.

Sadly, when the Fraternidad appeared before the courts of the church to request an official recognition of their organization, a number of ministers walked out. However, this meant that the remaining group was able to approve the request. So reluctantly the men in the church are beginning to accept the usefulness of a revitalized group of women. What is so amazing about sewing and growing vegetables? The point is that these women have organized themselves to do things traditionally done by men in this country. Some will have an income which they never had before. As well, they are learning to read and to understand more about good health and their favourite topic, the Christian faith.

Left: a participant in Mayan embroidery workshop. Above: Dr. Art Van Seters on lunch break with embroidery workers.

The women are serious in their endeavours but there is joy in their faces when they describe their activities. The joy comes from their faith as well as from the anticipation of learning more. New members are shy but, seeing and hearing their leaders, are inspired to become more confident. God is at work among La Fraternidad de Presbiteriales Mayas!

Mary Lou Johnston is a member of the WMS Council Executive and recently served six years on the PWS&D Committee. Mary Lou and her husband Geoff Johnston of Knox Church, Dunville spent two weeks in March 2000 visiting Presbyterian personnel in Central America and participating in the memorial to Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador.

Rediscovering Your Inner Child

Council 2000

May 7-10
Crieff Hills Community
Puslinch, Ontario

Opening

The 85th Annual Council Meeting of the Women's Missionary Society opened with a captivating presentation by the Rev. Maria Papp. Minister of the two-point charge of the Hungarian Church, Welland, and Crowland, Welland, Maria is a natural storyteller. Instead of reading scripture, Maria commits it to memory, and then "tells the story" dramatically with gestures and audience involvement. It was a powerful introduction to the theme "Rediscovering Your Inner Child".

A basket in the centre of each table held a small stuffed toy, crayons, and pastel coloured "white" chocolate flowers made by Pauline Lindsay. Pictures of Jesus with children decorated the walls and a variety of dolls and stuffed toys were placed about the room.

Morning Worship and Bible Study

Regional staff for Southwestern Ontario, Erin Crisfield led the morning worship and Bible study each morning. Her presentations were based on the Multiple Intelligences (see box). Along with Dorothy Henderson, Education in the Faith Advisory Committee, Erin led an evaluation of biblical adult education using three groups across the county (see January/February Glad Tidings 2000 pp14-15). These were based on the seven intelligences developed by Howard Gardner (*Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*), the theory being that learning takes many forms in the human brain. Each of us is born with a capacity to learn in many different ways. We develop preferred ways of learning, and we rely heavily on our preferred way. An eighth, naturalistic, has been added.

Multiple Intelligences
Interpersonal Intelligence (People Smart)
Intrapersonal Intelligence (Self Smart)
Verbal/Linguistic (Word Smart)
Visual/Spatial (Picture Smart)
Logical/Mathematical (Logic or Number Smart)
Body/Kinesthetic (Body, Sports or Hands Smart)
Musical/Rhythmic (Music Smart)
Naturalistic (Nature Smart)

Erin demonstrated how knowledge of the eight intelligences can help to ensure learning when planning group activities. Table groups explored activities, including preparation of worship, resulting in some very creative programming. It was interesting to note that the largest group by choice was the "choir" led by Esther Powell.

Motions

Alberta and the Northwest Synodical
Whereas Council Executive members' term of office ends after the May Council meetings and as Synodical

Presidents' terms end before Council, *Therefore*, we recommend that starting in 2001, Synodical Presidents' terms end after May Council meetings. This would ensure that members of the Planning and Program Committees plus Task Force members are at Council to complete the work they have been doing. DEFEATED

RESOLUTION:

Toronto-Kingston Synodical
We resolve that the Synodical of Toronto-Kingston is opposed to the Manifesto of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women*; namely, to the use of the word 'demand' as set forth in this document and, furthermore, that serious consideration be given to the issues regarding lesbianism in this document. We request that the WMS Council at its Annual Meeting in May at Crieff Hills take a long, hard look at the Manifesto (World March of Women 2000 against Poverty and Violence).

****The Manifesto was mailed to Presbyterial Presidents in March, 2000 from Margaret Robertson, Program Secretary.***

MOTION: that we reaffirm the email response to the National Action Committee Manifesto from Justice Ministries through Gail Turner. CARRIED

MOTION: that the response be circulated by Margaret Robertson to Presbyterial presidents, regional staff, Toronto-Kingston Synodical and all other Synodicals, Anna Cooper Auxiliary at Willowdale Presbyterian Church, and anyone else who may enquire about the Manifesto. CARRIED

Respectful Applause

Instead of clapping and disturbing a worshipful moment, show appreciation by raising hands and wiggling fingers.

Mission Presentations

In the spirit of the theme two young persons with mission exposure experience addressed delegates.

Megan Nelles spent 16 months in Central America. She was in Guatemala at the time hurricane Mitch struck the area. In Nicaragua, Megan worked with children and women. She described her experience as a ministry of presence. (See her story written especially for Glad Tidings elsewhere in this issue.)

Rev. Linda Pacquette and her daughter, Elisabeth visited Nicaragua through Youth in Mission (YIM) in the summer of 1999. Using a video presentation and passing around photographs, Linda and Elisabeth described the impact of the trip on their lives. Elisabeth said that when they planted trees as a group they left a part of themselves in Nicaragua.

The WMS gave grants to both Elisabeth and Megan in 1999 to enable them to take part in these meaningful experiences.

Roses for Glad Tidings

The editor of Glad Tidings, June Stevenson, was recognized for 20 years of service to the Society with the gift of a rose bush for her new garden.

Developing Theme Related Programs

Margaret Robertson led the Monday evening program using the pamphlet she developed "Theme Ideas for Meetings" (see Program pp 24-25). Delegates were divided into groups of their choosing to plan and present a creative activity based on a chosen scripture.

Discussions

Finance Task Force
Table groups discussed the future financing of regional staff.

President Mary Moorhead explained that a review is to be done in 2001, and that the WMS seeks to guarantee the money until 2003. $390,000 is given towards this at present. Table groups were asked to give the results of their discussion to the Finance Task Force for further consideration.

Priorities
Time was spent further developing the three WMS priorities decided on in November 1998: Promoting the work of the WMS, Promoting Mission, and Education; also on the Flames Focus for 2000-2001 on children, teens and young adults. Some of the creative ideas for children and youth included:

- WMS groups planning a workshop with youth introducing the WMS through displays, skits, etc.
- WMS groups being involved in mission education with Church School, children's rallies.
- Involving youth in local mission. Giving *Certificates of Recognition* to children and youth on Mission Sunday, April 29, 2001.

It was agreed that **Mission Awareness Sunday** was a successful event, and that more material will be prepared for next year.

Groups should be encouraged to try new patterns. Thunder Bay has kept Presbyterial going in a new way by having women from the four churches come together to do mission study. They have a presbyterial treasurer and a coordinating committee. One person is responsible for each meeting. The only distant group keeps in touch through email, and there is an annual event that all can attend.

As a result of the Priorities established in 1998, two task forces were put into place: Constitution & By-Laws, and Finance.

Video

At the Council Executive meeting in February 2000, it was agreed to fund a video in line with the priority on promoting the WMS. Corporate Video Producer John Archibald was present Tuesday afternoon and evening to record some of the sessions and interview individuals for the WMS video.

Finance

The estimates of $1,072,800 were approved for 2001. See annual report for details.

Christian Literature

Mary-Lou Johnston, who presented the Christian Literature report, commented that some of the requests in *Something Extra* are responded to when there are not enough other requests for money. In 1999, Christian Literature funds went to many places

around the world. In Canada, almost $4,000 was sent to various projects including the Canadian Bible Society, Alzheimer Society, Saskatchewan, Journey to Wholeness Healing Fund - "The Grieving Indian" Book, among others.

Annual Report Book

The 2000 Annual Report book will not be printed this year in (pink) book format. Three separate pieces will be done: *Stories of Mission, Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting* and a *popular report* on the work of the WMS which can be used for promotional purposes.

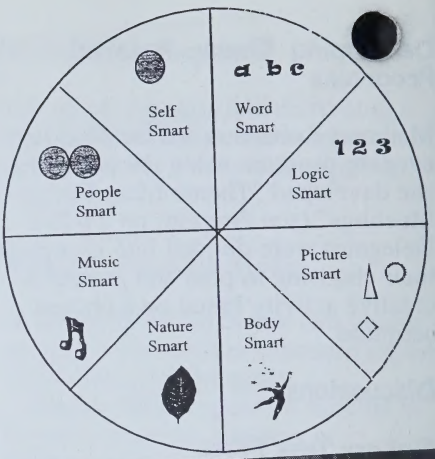
Korean WMS

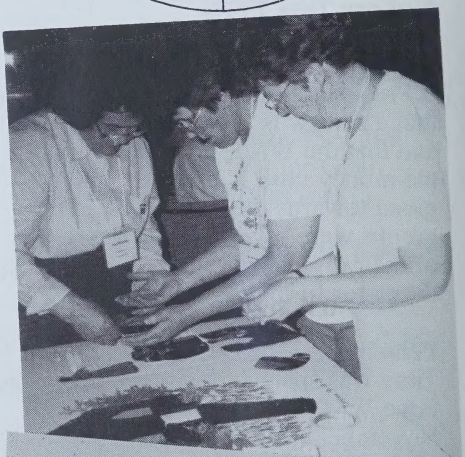
Junghee Ahn who started the Korean WMS five years ago, and Suyeon Jin of the Korean WMS were present at the meeting. The Korean WMS has approximately 200 members in Toronto involved in 14 churches.

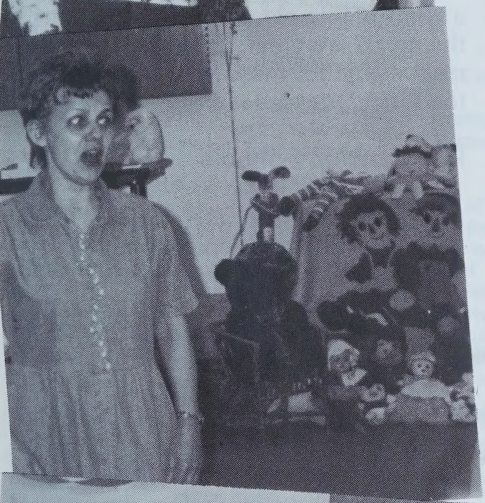
The Korean WMS has published a newsletter, held retreats geared to second and third generation Koreans, and raised money for a women's shelter, among other activities. It is difficult to involve women since many of them are too busy in their own churches. Junghee said that the Korean Church does not have women elders yet. The Korean women are trying to teach the Koreans to change their attitudes towards women.

Covenant Community with Children and Youth

Ian Morrison gave a presentation on children and youth on behalf of Dorothy Henderson, Education for







Discipleship. He referred to the Flames initiative for 2000-2001 and encouraged WMS members to be actively involved. Many resources are available for congregations and groups.

Mission Study 2000-2001

Margaret Robertson and June Stevenson led the evening program which included a report on the current learning/sharing project *Partners: Meeting Friends in Cuba*. The offering of $610 received later will go towards Christian Education materials for children in Cuba.

The 2000-2001 learning/sharing project is *Partners: Meeting Friends in Malawi* written by Heather Jones. The monies received will go towards subsidizing insecticide-treated bed nets.

Adult materials focus on the Jubilee theme. Using material from the study book written by Anne Saunders, *Living as a Jubilee People*, each table group explored a section of one session. Reporting on their activities, each group lit a candle. Margaret led in the singing of the hymn Jubilee by Jim Strathdee, using a cassette tape to introduce the music. June closed the evening with a prayer from the study book.

Atlantic Mission Society

Joan Cho, President of the AMS, spoke of their Society as being "the mouse that roared", small but noisy. The AMS has 416 members in four provinces, and 642 home helpers. Their secretary pro tem right now is a man.

Council Executive Retirees

Esther Powell and Fleur Eenkhoorn were thanked for all the work they have done during their years on Council Executive and the gifts they brought to the Council meetings. Fleur was thanked especially for the Morning Watch materials she has prepared the past three years.

New Council Executive Members and Commissioning of Officers

For the first time in the history of the WMS a Vice President is from the west. Joanne Instance of Winnipeg has accepted this position. Three new members were welcomed: Sheila Paterson, Doris McAndless and Gloria Wasacase (see back page for all members). Margaret Wilson conducted the installation of the Council Executive members who came forward holding balloons. At the end of the installation members threw balloons into the air to represent their gifts.

Closing Worship and Communion Service

Rev. Sidney Chang, Regional Staff person for the Synod/Synodical of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario led the closing worship. Using a cup, water and bowl, Sidney illustrated how people sometimes go to church empty, and are filled to overflowing with God's grace. We serve out of our "overflow", our abundance.

Evaluations

Council 2000 evaluations are very encouraging. Delegates rated Maria Papp's storytelling presentation very highly, wishing there were more excellent resource persons like her. Worship and Bible Study was inventive and varied, with many new ideas. The 'hands on' activities helped to reinforce the different intelligences, and made the time not only enjoyable but a learning experience.

The Book Display and Sale got high praise, especially the use of 'bag and tag' which encouraged people to put their purchases in a bag which was tallied up at a later time.

Everyone agreed that Crieff Hills is a comfortable place to meet, and that the meals are great. (But, they are not responsible for those who said they ate too much!)

Residential Schools

Stephen Kendall, Principal Clerk of General Assembly spoke about the lawsuits related to the residential schools. After 1925 The Presbyterian Church in Canada through the WMS, operated two schools, Cecilia Jeffrey in Kenora, Ontario and Birtle in Manitoba. There are some 7,000 lawsuits before the federal government and the four churches involved. Thirteen of these are before the Presbyterian Church which had the fewest schools.

The lawsuits are primarily related to cultural deprivation, although a few involve abuse. The Presbyterian Church has so far set aside $200,000 from 1999 and $200,000 from other monies to deal with the defence.

The Presbyterian Church is involved in four approaches: defending the lawsuits, Alternate Dispute Resolution, working with the United, Anglican and Roman Catholic churches on a common approach to present to the

federal government, and Journey to Wholeness.

Stephen has asked for names of former staff who may be able to provide information and/or would benefit from pastoral care.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada
L'Église presbytérienne au Canada

MODERATOR OF THE 125TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
The Rev. Arthur Van Seters, B.A., B.D., Th.M., Th.D.

April 3, 2000

Charlotte Brown, Executive Secretary
Women's Missionary Society
The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Dear Charlotte and Members of the WMS Council,

I regret that I am not able to bring you greetings in person but grateful for the invitation to send you this note. So let me begin by greeting you in the name of Jesus Christ and of our Presbyterian Church in Canada.

I am deeply conscious this year of the work of our missionaries, particularly oversees. Last summer Rowena and I witnessed the arduous challenges that Arlene Onuoha faces in the volatile world of Nigeria. Just managing to live is almost all-consuming though she is wonderfully supported by her husband, David. This spring we had the privilege of seeing the Kims in Guatemala, the Pattersons in El Salvador and also Joe Reed and Denise Van Wissen who came to El Salvador for 20th anniversary of the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero. We were utterly amazed to see the courageous energy of the Presbyterian Mayan women, the vision of the Baptist Federation of Churches with whom we are now partners in El Salvador and the daring faith of the people who joined in the Romero events.

In the fall I also appreciated seeing the work of the Anishinabe Fellowship Centre and of Floral House in Winnipeg. These are but two examples of Gospel caring, as the public sector appears to turn its attention away from the neediest of our citizens. Clearly, the call to proclaim "Good News for the poor" is increasingly urgent.

Your task as a missionary movement in our church has done so much to inspire this kind of national and global vision and to challenge our young people and many others to engage in mission. I am sure that you steadfastly remember these and other missionaries in your prayers. I can affirm that this prayer support is vital, indeed essential, to our involvements in Canada and abroad.

I am deeply grateful for your long history of missionary zeal. I trust that your Council meeting will be one of bold imagination and strong mutual support in the name of Christ.

Sincerely,

Arthur Van Seters +

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Celebrate

What it Means to Really Live

by Megan Nelles

People often react with surprise when I say that I would go back to Central America in a second if the opportunity arose. Many see my time away as an ordeal to have been tolerated as opposed to enjoyed. The media fills us, constantly, with the stereotypes of what a third world, war stricken country is like and the picture is never a pretty one.

There is, of course, a great deal of misery and depravation to be seen in these countries but to see only that is to walk down a street staring at the paving stones and missing the beautiful sky above you.

We read the newspaper and see the latest breaking news flashes on the television and we ask ourselves "how can people live like that?" The ironic truth is that they know how to really live. I was once asked what the biggest lesson I learned was and maybe the most basic, yet life changing realization I came to was just how powerful a smile can be.

When life's pace slows a bit and I have some silent time to myself, I reflect, not on the adventures of volcano climbing in Guatemala, scuba diving in Honduras or hieroglyph exploring in Nicaragua, but on the precious months spent with complete strangers.

I remember one day we went to visit an old cathedral, the Santo Do[redacted]go Cathedral, in the downtown core of Managua. The cathedral was destroyed in the earthquake of 1972 yet restoration has only just begun on this magnificent piece of architecture.

In the meantime the cathedral has, like many of the buildings destroyed in that same earthquake, been inhabited by the homeless of Nicaragua's streets.

As we approached the enormous front staircase that day, a group of four children approached us, begging for money. With the growing rate of addiction to substances such as alcohol and solvents, it was not my habit to oblige such requests but to give a piece of fruit or a bun instead.

That day, however, I was unprepared and so I apologized to them and we continued to chat. Within a very few moments we had exchanged names and a little about our families and so they invited me to go and play with them.

For the next half an hour I gave them piggy-backs and swung them around in wind-mills and we had a great time. I was sad to say goodbye when the time came to go.

Several weeks later, I was back in the same area with another group and we saw those same children again. This time they came up to us asking us not for money but to come and play. They had remembered me and they greeted me by name.

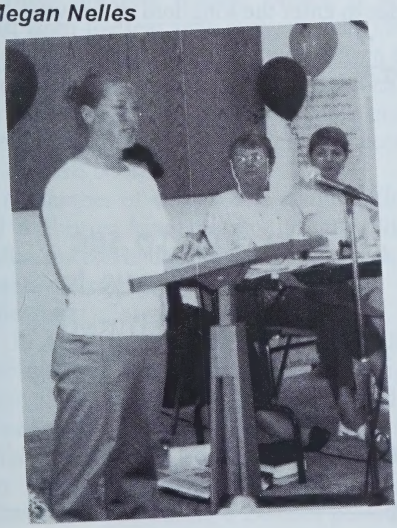
I wasn't sure if I should be happy about that or not. It seemed so pathetic to me that I should stand out so much in their memories merely because I took some time out of my day to play with and enjoy myself with them when it cost me nothing at all.

In the midst of so much need and so much hunger, when they didn't know where their next meal would come from or if they would have a place to spend the night, what they hungered for most was love and respect.

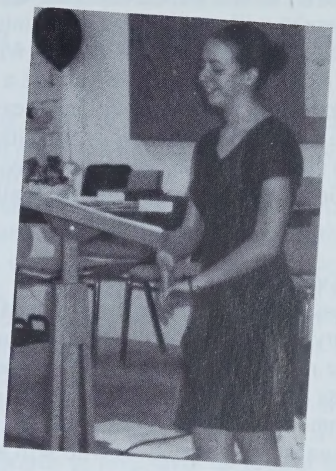
We focus so much on attaining material goods and collecting new and exciting experiences in order to say that we have "lived" that we forget about the simple and most beautiful things in life, a little bit of human compassion, one to another. Ernesto Che Gueverra was quoted as saying that " a little kindness person to person is more important than a vast love for all mankind." Jesus challenged us to love the lowliest of the earth; what a wonderful and promising task He set before for us!

Paul Simon once said: "when I run dry, I shall stop a while and think of you." To the children on the steps of that cathedral and so many others like them; thank you for teaching me what it means to have a loving spirit, I will never forget you.

- Megan Nelles



- Elisabeth Pacquette



What did Jesus Mean...?

Thanks to readers who wrote expressing their thoughts on what Jesus meant when he said that we must become like little children in order to enter the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 18:3).

These articles were displayed at Council for everyone to read. Excerpts are printed here from some of the responses. Others will be printed later as space is available.

Kaye Lockwood: When we are first "born" into the family of God (the kingdom of heaven), we recognize a new kind of life, and our dependence on God. God has called us to him one way or another, and we come in response to that call. As we begin to be aware of his presence and his working, we are filled with awe and delight - just as the little child comes to delight in the growing relationship with his parents.

Lillian Brooks, First Presbyterian Church, New Westminster, BC: Jesus tells his disciples that a simple child-like faith and trust is what God expects of his

followers. Neither our intellect nor our good works will entitle us to entry into Heaven. The Keys of the Kingdom will not be given to you because you are a member of the Mensa Group, but Heaven will be inhabitated by those who, with a simple child-like faith, are able to say, "My God knows everything!" He really does.

Rev. Evan H. Jones, Presbytery of London: Jesus illustrates the virtue of humility by means of a child, telling us that we must return to a child-like receptiveness and trust, if we would enter God's kingdom. Jesus told us that it is those who have honesty and openness who will enter the kingdom of God. Self-seeking, selfishness, self-centredness, have no part in a sincere follower of Christ.

We must be born anew!

Agnes Conkey, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Ajax, ON:

A child trusts...
A child is friendly...
A child is dependent...
A child is uninhibited...
A child lives in constant wonder...
A child is humble...
A child expects an answer...

Marjorie Wincott, I remember reading Matthew 18 as a child. It always remained in my mind because it comforted. It certainly sounded as if Jesus loved little children, even had a special place for us in heaven.

Catherine B. Rice, First Presbyterian Church, North Pelham: To be loved is an absolute requirement... Children make no wild demands if they are loved, They are appreciative in their own young way, and can be happy over small incidents. They are easily affected emotionally, as

everything in their little world is important to them. Even small children feel sympathy for another in trouble.

Knowing all these facts, in His wisdom, Jesus who loved little ones would want them to grow up in a loving enviromnent with encouragement, love and comfort....

Mary Fountain, Guelph, ON: I believe that no matter how old we become, we are still children in the eyes of God. We cannot understand all God's ways or answer all the questions of why God allows some things to happen. But he is in control of the great plan for humankind and the universe. Therefore we must trust our Creator like a child trusts loving earthly parents in order to enter the kingdom of heaven.

Discovery

I come to see
where Jesus is
and find myself
set upon the Rock

Joanna M. Weston

CELEBRATING:
Children, Teens, Young Adults

The Women's Missionary Society has a long history in work with children, teens and young adults. In recent years money has been given on the national level to support the work of the Covenant Community with Children and Youth, Education for Discipleship, Life and Mission Agency of The Presbyterian Church.

From local groups, we hear that many are still actively involved with young people in some innovative ways. We are going to tell some of those stories here. **Send us you story and help us celebrate!**

SPECIAL EVENT
Heather Jones Tells it Like it is!

Recently, while Heather Jones was on leave from Malawi, she spoke at the Presbyterial meeting at Willowdale Church, Toronto. During the course of her talk she mentioned that the number of students in a single grade can run up to about 250 children!

There are few reading books, if any, apart from the teacher's copy, and the children learn by copying down words from the blackboard into their notebooks. English is taught in the schools, and to become more fluent in reading, the children are desperate for English books.

A member of Willowdale congregation, and a former kindergarten teacher, Nina Hillier, asked Heather if she would speak to Canadian students about the needs of Malawian children.

On April 11, Heather gave a day of her time speaking to different grade groupings. Later in the afternoon, she promoted a game for about 32 chosen children from the different grades to come together so that they would learn what was necessary for Malawians to do during a 24-hour period to ensure that they had enough water, firewood and food to survive for that day.

The children were put in family groupings and given a designated position, either of parent or child. They learned that the head of the household didn't have as much to do as the rest of the family, and that he usually decided what they needed to buy when the family scraped enough money together to go shopping.

The school gym was used and the children did a lot of running forwards and backwards to give them an idea of how far it was to the well. They then had to pump a certain number of times, pretending to put the water into the buckets, and return the same way they came, this time remembering they were supposed to be carrying water on their heads.

Meanwhile, other family members were looking for firewood "cards" hidden around the gym. Others pretended to be planting, digging, cooking, and so on. One child observed, "There's no time for school!"

The children learned a lot that day, including how a mother carries her baby on her back safely. Heather left the school laden down with three bags of reading books the children had brought in for her to take back to Malawi.

- Heather illustrates how a mother carries her baby safely in Malawi.

A Prayer/Poem:

Angel Protector

Angel Protector
Keeper from harm

Shield me from danger
Protect me from sin

Walk with me always
By day and by night

Know my temptations
Deliver my fate

See me through bad times
Show me to good

And when my time comes
Lead me to God! Amen.

Roberta G. McClelland

Roberta G. McClelland is a religion writer from London, ON who has been published in Christian magazines throughout Canada and the United States.

MISSION STUDY 2000-2001
Adult/Youth:*Living as a Jubilee People*

Children/Youth: Learning/Sharing - *Partners: Meeting Friends in Malawi*

For more information contact The Book Room (See p 28).

Tam Corbett Receives Honorary Degree

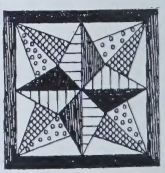
Tam Corbett (above left) is surprised by a gift from the Women's Missionary Society Council Executive. Presenting her with a card and donation in her name to Presbyterian World Service & Development is President of Council Executive Mary Moorhead.

Tam received the degree doctor of divinity (honoris causa) from Knox College on May 10, 2000.

Tam was Moderator of the 122nd General Assembly and former executive secretary of the WMS.

Correction to *Sharing God's Mission Together* - page 12, box 4, fourth line should read: "In October 1517, he nailed his 95 theses to the door of Wittenberg Castle Church". (Also on page 16 #3 John Gutenburg is know more correctly by his German name *Johann.*)

Millenium Quilt Exhibit



August 10-September 17 (September 15	First Presbyterian Church, Pictou, NS re-enactment of the arrival of the ship, The Hector)
September 23-October 9	St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Burnbrae, ON
October 14-November 4	New Minas United Church, New Minas, NS
November 10-November 27	Grace Presbyterian Church, Orleans, ON

Responses to the March/April 2000 issue from cassette listeners:

This magazine is excellent! The letters from missionaries are so moving. I loved Adele [Halliday's] message. Readers are pleasant. Keep up the good work. Sophie Jackson, Sarnia, ON

A very interesting tape. I certainly enjoy hearing them. Thanks so much. Nina Bushell, Holyrood, ON

I particularly enjoyed the March/April issue. Thank you. Joan Laird, Kincardine, ON

I cannot express adequately how much I appreciate receiving the Glad Tidings in a cassette. It keeps me in touch with the Society as a whole. The March/April issue has been very interesting. Helen Fowler Bennett, Cobourg, ON

I have appreciated having this tape. I have learned of interesting items I would not have known otherwise. Thank you and God bless. Anne Stewart, Ailsa Craig, ON

Thought for the Day

Compiled by Eve Strickland

May the Lord touch your heart with His finger of love and leave a fingerprint no one can rub off.

- Robert Schuller, Be Happy You are Loved, 1986, p 257.

Changing your name or address?

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program...program...program...program...program...program...

Margaret Robertson
Program Secretary

Working with Themes Creatively

Planning

1. What are you planning?
A meeting, breakfast gathering, mission festival, day trip (local 'mission exposure tour'), conference, picnic, camp, retreat, display board, wall hanging, intergenerational event....

2. What do you want to accomplish? (your goals and objectives)

3. Prepare your timeline and/or schedule (if applicable).

4. Name the person(s) who will prepare, collect and/or purchase supplies required.

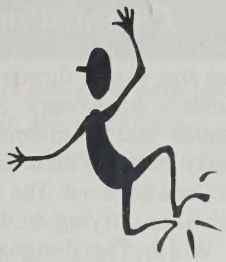
5. For gatherings/events/meetings:
-choose leaders
-promote/advertise (especially person-to-person)
-plan room arrangement

6. Prepare article, content, and/or presentation.....

Developing Themes

There are many ways to develop themes for meetings and events:
A. Start with one or more of the following:
- Bible
- Books
- Stories of Mission
- Letters from missionaries
- Map of the world
- Objects - food, pictures, flowers
- Mission Study

B. Choose a theme that your source indicates to you.



C. How will you present the theme? Be creative!
write a song, hymn, psalm or poem
use music
paraphrase a Biblical story for the 21st Century
use drama, role play and/or dance
plan a guided meditation
draw, paint, cartoon
plan textile art (quilting, batik, weaving, banners…..)
organize community outreach
choose your speaker(s)

Thank You!: for all your positive remarks, pictures and creative ideas from Mission Awareness Sunday. There will definitely be more materials forthcoming for next year. Watch in the next issue of Glad Tidings for more information about this special Sunday. Margaret Robertson, Program Secretary.

- Photos show creative planning of table groups at Council 2000.

Forward in Faith

Over the years, former members of the Women's Missionary Society have left legacies and/or memorial gifts to the Society. Some of these have been designated; others have not. The latter are available to assist in carrying on the regular work of the WMS. The designated monies have been set up as Endowment Funds, which in some cases are available, in other cases the interest is available, for the purpose requested by the donor.

The purposes for which these funds have been designated include education, missions, leadership training, mission education, conferences, youth work and leadership development. Some of the Endowment Funds are as follows:

***The Memorial Bursary Fund** permits the Society, through Knox College, Presbyterian College and the Vancouver School of Theology, each to provide two $500 bursaries annually to students preparing for work within the Christian Church.

***The New Memorial Bursary Fund** grants bursaries to diaconal students and graduates to assist with their studies.

***The Isabella Brown Memorial Fund** provides grants for individuals to attend leadership training events which equip them for Christian service.

***The Nettie Gemmell Memorial Fund** is for missions in Canada and overseas, with special emphasis on Nigeria.

***The Mary Whale Fund** is for the production and promotion of mission education materials.

***The Margaret Stirling Fund** is for the preparation and promotion of programs for children and teens, and the training of those involved in working with these groups.

***The Louise Reith Memorial Fund** provides assistance for leadership training events for officers of Synodical and Presbyterials.

***The Dr. Pauline Brown Bursary Fund** (set up a year ago) assists trainees for Health Care in India.

These Funds have assisted many students and leaders within our Church over the years. More than $40,000 was made available by the Society in 1999.

A pamphlet on our Endowment Funds is available on request from our national office. Applications and requests for grants should be directed to the WMS Executive Secretary at 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, ON M3C 1J7 E-mail:cbrown@presbyterian.ca

Giollo G. Kelly, Treasurer

Seniors on the Go

Living out of Cans, Boxes and Bags

by Norma Tomlinson

Quick Summer Desserts

Baked Fruit With Topping

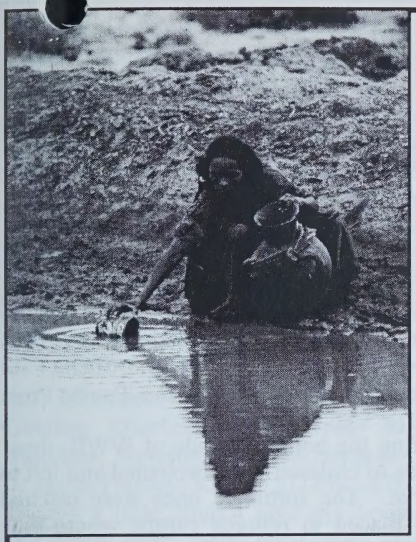
Cut up apples, peaches, pears or nectarines into a deep dish. Sprinkle sugar and cinnamon on the fruit. (If you need to watch your sugar intake, it's still very good without it.) Sprinkle 1/2 bag of muffin mix on top of the fruit. Bake at 375F for 20-25 minutes to form a crust.

Use the rest of the muffin mix to make a dozen muffins, adding any variety of chocolate chips, nuts, coconut and so on.

Baked Apples

Take two Spy or Mutsu apples. Wash and core but leave the bottom intact. In the hollow put 1 tbsp brown sugar, 1/4 tsp cinnamon, and a dot of butter. Put in pyrex dish. Drizzle a bit of honey over apples and add about an inch of water. Cover with microwave cover or plastic wrap with a small opening for steam to escape. Microwave for about 5 minutes.

Bon appetit for you and a friend!



A woman in southern Ethiopia scoops precious water from a muddy pond.
Photo: Paul Jeffrey/ACT International

When the poor and needy seek water,
and there is none,
and their tongue is parched with thirst,
I the Lord will answer them,
I the God of Israel will not forsake them.
Isaiah 41:17 (NRSV)

Working together, we can make a difference

From emergency relief in drought stricken areas, to digging wells and boreholes in remote communities and teaching water conservation techniques to farmers; PWS&D partners are committed to programs which help local communities obtain the water they need to survive.

Presbyterian World Service & Development

50 Wynford Dr. Toronto, ON M3C 1J7 tel: 416-441-1111 or 1-800-619-7301
email: pwsd@presbyterian.ca web: www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd

UPDATE!! FLAMES MISSION TOURS **UPDATE!!**

Six new opportunities* to visit the work of our mission partners!
*More tours may be added

FALL 2000 (tentative dates)

Mozambique/Malawi - September 7-September 25
Leaders: Rick Fee, Mark Gordon, Heather Jones, Linda Inglis
(Possible safari extension in Malawi - extra cost & days)

The Holy Land - October 18 - November 2
Leader: Marjorie Ross

India - November 25 - December 14
Leaders: Pauline Brown, Clarence McMullen

Guatemala/El Salvador - November 26 - December 10
Leaders: Ken & Kennis Kim, Jim & Brenda Patterson

Indicate your interest early; places are limited (minimum 4); 10-25 days/costs: approx $2000-4500
Specific Tour Brochures or information: Contact Sarah Hoag, E-mail: shoag@presbyterian.ca or
International Ministries (416) 441-1111 X249 or 1-800-619-7301
In cooperation with Conference World Tours Ont. Reg No. 04614152, 04614137
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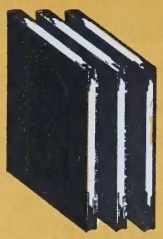

BOOKS

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Please do not send payment with your order. (An invoice including postage and applicable tax will be sent with your order.) Please include name and location of congregation. **Note: VISA and Mastercard now accepted.**

Whether summer time is a season for "getting out of" or "getting into", you will be sure to find something on this list to tempt you.

"Get aways"

Soul Gardening Cultivating the Good Life by Terry Hershey. Augsburg G7169 $22.25
Treat yourself to a little interior cultivation with Soul Gardening by Terry Hershey. People who love this world, people who pay attention, are gardeners, whether or not they have ever picked up a trowel. Because gardening is not just about digging. Or planting, for that matter. Gardening is about cherishing. And to cherish, one must be present. Open the gate to the garden of your soul.

Home By Another Way by Barbara Brown Taylor. Cowley Publications G7343 $20.25
If summer is generally not your sermon reading time, you might just be persuaded to change your mind by Barbara Brown Taylor's latest collection *Home By Another Way*. Named one of the most effective preachers in the English-speaking world, she will catch your attention with a riveting phrase or striking allusion. As she leads you down unfamiliar pathways, you will be surprised to discover new truths about yourself, your community, and your world.

Warning: the Brown Taylor bug is extremely powerful. You won't be able to control your zest for reading more of her work once you have been bitten!

Sleeping With Bread Holding What Gives You Life by Dennis Linn, Sheila Fabricant Linn and Matthew Linn. Paulist Press G4918 $22.25
During the bombing raids of WWII, thousands of children were orphaned and left to starve. The fortunate ones were rescued and placed in refugee camps where they received food and good care. But many of these children who had lost so much could not sleep at night. They feared waking up to find themselves once again homeless and without food. Nothing seemed to reassure them. Finally, someone hit upon the idea of giving each child a piece of bread to hold at bedtime. Holding their bread, these children could finally sleep in peace. All through the night the bread reminded them, "Today I ate and I will eat again tomorrow."

Sleeping With Bread Holding What Gives You Life asks you to reflect at the end of each day on two questions, "For what am I most grateful? And "For what am I least grateful?" In this way, we become aware of moments that at first we might pass by as insignificant, moments that ultimately can give direction for our lives. This simple but spiritually profound book is very suited for personal or group use and can be developed as the basis of a retreat. When we sleep with bread we are empowered to choose our own way under any circumstances.

"Getting Intos"

Here are some fun ideas for getting wound up for the fall season.

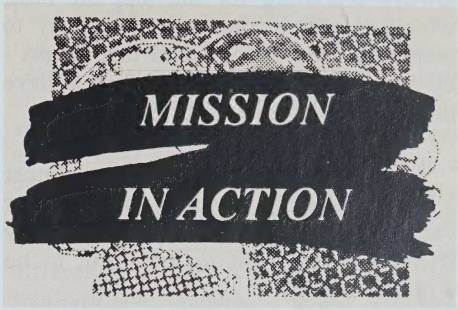
The Next Voice You Hear Sermons we Preach Together by David Steele. Geneva Press G6997 $17.50
This collection of participatory dramas and devotions will be a delight to all. David Steele is blessed with a good head for theology, but also with a very developed funny bone! Rather than passively receiving the word from the worship leader, all present will find themselves in the midst of the Word. Very adaptable for group meetings as well as Sunday morning.

701 Sentence Sermons Attention Getting Quotes for Church Signs, Bulletins, Newsletters, and Sermons by L. James Harvey. Kregel G7258 $16.50
There's a little church near my home no one knew was there until they started putting out these sentence sermons on a day-glo board at the curb. Now everyone I know can tell you what the message for the week is. Funny, true and timely often, these catchy one-liners are evangelism for a drive-through world.

"Get Togethers"

Here's one for the kid in all of us:
World Peas and other ways to make a difference: Program Ideas for Leaders of Children. Rebekah Chevalier, editor. United Church Press G7132 $21.25

World Peas invites children and those who learn with them to help change the world. This mission resource book provides tools to tackle important issues such as peace, poverty, the environment, racism and injustice from a faith perspective. Stories, crafts, games and worship ideas all included. Suitable for midweek groups, Sunday School, VBS, intergenerational events, mission festivals, and hometime activities.



A hearty "thank you" to personnel who send letters, stories, photos, etc. With today's technology, I am receiving perhaps four times the previous volume of material. Please understand if your material is condensed.

A reminder to readers that annual reports from Canada Ministries and International Ministries are available in "book" form "Stories of Mission" available free from The Book Room. Copies also go out to every group with the Annual Report mailing.

Marlene Buwalda
Taiwan

Chinese New Year, 2000 - I have been here for just about six months now and I experienced my first Chinese New Year. This holiday is similar to our Christmas to many Taiwanese, either because they have no faith or they are Taoist who believe in many gods and so have many small days to celebrate and burn fake money to the ghosts. These five days are the only days that many Taiwanese take off since with their own businesses and their tenacious attitudes, holidays are not considered very productive. Many Taiwanese work seven days a week, many hours a day. The attitude of the typical Taiwanese is very money oriented,

always searching for the top, the best, which means, to them, the best way to make the most money, and this means - by any means. Many Taiwanese believe that is why the crime rate is very high.

During the Chinese New Year, almost all of the country moves to the south for vacation. I, on the other hand with my friend Fennie, went to the north to be with her family...

The tradition is that the sons and daughters, if married, go to the husband's family for New Years Eve and New Years, but two days after, the daughters (if married) are finally allowed to go to see her parents, and this would be the only time during the year that she would celebrate with them. In older times, she would always stay with her husband and her husband's family, taking care of them after marrying into that family. Now it is a little more relaxed but still the chauvinistic attitude remains. As a liberated woman here one is very concerned about getting married since she will not only marry the man, but his entire family and be expected to forget (mostly) her own family and take care of his, completely. Slowly this is changing but still for an independent woman to consider marriage is a very difficult step here.

To the north of Taiwan we took the coastal highway. Beautiful rough coasts and soft beaches alternated, covering the water's edge. During a typhoon I was told this highway is covered with ocean waves.

We arrived at her parents (she is not married so she is still able to go to her own parents and celebrate however she wishes). Friday night, the feast of new years consisted of fried rice noodles and many other dishes, such as whole steamed cod fish, fried Taiwanese sweet sausage, hot pot (which is like a pot of soup with all kinds of things boiled in it such as pork, vegetables etc.), beef soup, cold chicken, potato salad (I think this was for me, not very traditional). I brought a dish of manicotti for them to try some western food, and Fennie made baked swordfish.

After the feast the girls and mother usually clean up - and then the sons, and daughters, if working, give their parents a red envelope with money in it to congratulate them for the new year, give them good luck for the coming year, and also to say thanks for bringing them up. If the children have their own children all the adults must give the grandchildren red envelopes with money and the parents of the children must give the other children envelopes so everyone is pressured.

Most people here take a week off after the holidays and travel to the US; many people here strive to have another home in the US to visit or at some point move in. The houses here are not elaborate at all and very run-down, because people show their wealth by sending it overseas.

Fennie and I, on our way home, went to a park at the edge of the northern coast. It was full of rocks shaped by the ocean and wind, very calming, and a place where you can actually only hear the waves of the coast. Usually the silence is accompanied by motorcycle, or firecrackers, or cars, or people. The society is very hyper, and not interested in nature for some reason. But I am planted in the center of the population that cares and this is where the spirit of the Lord envelops you and you see peace....

Happy New Year! May God bless you and keep you safe for another year.

Marlene

Adele Halliday
Komathai, Kenya

Spring 2000 - I have been sick - just a minor illness, essentially a bad case of the flu, strep throat and allergic reactions to medications and such.

Over the past few weeks, I have thought about a friend of mine who has sunglasses, tinted pink. As she dons her glasses, the world is shifted into shades of red. Familiar things still look familiar, but slightly altered. It isn't until you take off the glasses that you even realize that things are perhaps not as they should be.

That's how it was with me. The not-so-serious sicknesses that stubbornly clung to my body for weeks became a lens through which I carefully viewed my surroundings. There was a slight shift in how I looked at things. And the sickness became a lens and filter through which I saw things.

I saw a young woman leafing earnestly through the pages of a village health care book, wondering if it was really the flu or something else. I saw a community trying to send this young woman to the hospital to get an injection, which seems to be the prescription for most infections. I saw people who worried at the sight of their friend, with exhausted eyes, a scratchy voice, and general melancholy. I saw a group of mentally challenged childen who were confused at the sight of their teacher, slumped in a tired heap over the table. And again, I saw the same young woman-child becoming increasingly frustrated at her perceived inability to work effectively at the school.

It is the last image that has stuck with me the most. In a situation where verbal communication is sometimes difficult, I have learned to use other means of talking to the children. Since my communication must span cultural and linguistic challenges and still get a clear message across and back, I often try to use non-verbal cues to communicate to them a message of love. I am not under the grave illusion that my teaching "academics" at Komothai will make a grave difference in the lives of the children. Realistically speaking, some children may learn to count, some may learn their ABCs, and may read simple words in their mother tongue. Many will not. But, teaching academics is not all that I feel that I am called to do.

I want to leave the students knowing that I love them and that God loves them. And particularly with these mentally challenged children, who are away from home, gentle touches and physical contact are particularly effective in bringing a smile to their faces. Hearing a familiar voice and feeling touch are excellent means of communicating love and security.

I seek to love. Recently, because of this illness, I felt like I had been robbed of a privilege - I did not have the energy to simply be with them at the end of the day. I couldn't hold and touch and play with the students the way that I used to. And I was sad.

Chances are high that they will forget much of the academics that I teach them. But a message of love... ahh, this is timeless.

One day, I found this Kikuyu proverb, which when translated, means this: 'Parents do not feel sick when wiping the mucous from their child's nose'. Sure, I am not a parent, and these are not my children. But none-the-less, we seem to have adopted each other and since I am the only teacher that lives with them, we seem to have formed a kind of a

makeshift family. That means that at night when I hear them crying, I must go and ask them what is wrong. It means that when I fetch my water and see someone with the back of their dress unbuttoned, that I must button it for them. And it means that when I see a child with a cold, I must tell them 'mira' (wipe your nose), but if they cannot, then I must help them do it themselves.

So, I wipe their drool, their noses, their tears, and cuddle them and cradle them when they are sometimes sad. And for the several weeks that I have been sick, I haven't been able to do this.

I love these children, and can say that freely. But I think that in North America, 'love' is one of the most overused words in our vocabulary. We toss it around easily as if it is some insignificant emotion and feeling. We talk of a love of chocolate, and of television shows [and so on]. Yet the love that we embrace the most seems to be a love of things, not for people. Do we truly love the way that Christ commands us to?

Do we love the unlovely? Do we love our enemies? Those who have wronged us? Do we truly love our neighbours as we love ourselves? Would we really be willing to lay down our lives for one another? Perhaps not. I know that for myself, I could not yet answer 'yes' to all of these questions, I do not love as I ought.

"The most important commandment", answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these". (Mark 12:29-31)

When did we fall in love with things and possessions and money rather than people? When did our material comforts become so central to our existence that we couldn't give them up to offer some simple love? When did we become so comfortable with the way that we were that we couldn't become uncomfortable to share with others? How many of us would be willing to suffer for the cause of Christ, to live simply, and to really love one another as we were commanded to?

Can you imagine what kind of world we would live in if we did?

I thought about these things when I was sick and couldn't be with the children. Teaching at the special school is almost my second focus, all I have ever really wanted to do is love the children I work with. And that is what I saw so clearly when I was ill. Thanks be to God for this clarity.

Blessings and love;
Adele

Margaret Vanderzweerde
India

May 19, 2000 - Greetings and best wishes to all. Today I am writing you about my experience in Nepal as it concerns a girl, born blind, who is sponsored by people at Stamford Presbyterian Church in Niagara Falls.

In Nepal just being born female puts you down into a category by yourself. In that culture females are considered lower than the cattle families keep, and as a result, when there is lack of food, females are last to eat.

Being born female, blind, and of tribal background is a "no fail" recipe for a life of suffering. There is no hope for such a girl, unless she is picked up for

OVERSEAS STAFF BIRTHDAYS

SEPTEMBER

7 - David Villalonga, Nicaragua
14 - Michael Lessard-Clouston, Japan
16 - Arlene Onuoha, Nigeria
16 - Denise van Wissen, Guatemala
22 - Jim Patterson, El Salvador
24 - Christina Schwarz, Nepal
27 - Clara Henderson, Malawi

OCTOBER

5 - Kennis Kim, Guatemala
9 - Mark Gordon, Mozambique
20 - Lezlie Cowley Allison, Cameroon
23 - Glenn Inglis, Malawi
27 - David Josiah Allison, Cameroon

sponsorship by an organization offering scholarships.

Binita Asmita Bhattarai was born October 10, 1986 in a village in rural Nepal. When the UMN, our PCC partner, commenced to work in the area where Asmita lived, the non formal education team recognized her as a girl with promise. She was found to be intelligent and a willing student. Eventually the UMN scholarship officers persuaded her parents to release Asmita and allow her to move to Pokhara where, at the Shree Amar Singh School for the blind, Asmita began her studies while living in the hostel. She was provided with all the necessities of life and blossomed into a young lady with beautiful character. Her ability to apply herself to studies, and her iron will to succeed, made her a "star pupil". A few years ago, when the scholarship program was to be discontinued for lack of funds, she was offered continued support through my home congregation from whom I had received funds "for my work" , with the request to use it where the Lord led me.

Since then Asmita has been at the Pokhara School. I visited her on April 24. It was a joy to get to know her personally. She is a happy girl, has many friends, and is still a great student. She has just completed grade 5 and averages 79% overall. What impressed me is that she loves English. Her final mark for the year was 78% and she has taken a second, optional, English course in which she averaged 76%. When I asked her what she hoped to do with her life, her response was: "I want to finish my schooling here, if possible, and come on staff here, like some of my teachers who are products of this school."

She acknowledged that without the support she had received, her future would have been very bleak indeed. The hope that she has been given is the most wonderful gift we could have given her, in Jesus' name. Because of this she has been confronted with the living and loving Lord Jesus, in and through whom this was possible.

I am confident that she will continue to be sponsored for the remaining years at the school for the blind and pray that she will come to know our Lord as her personal Saviour.

This concrete mission experience for Stamford Church can encourage all of us to reach out and touch someone, who, without our help and guidance, would never hear of Jesus or have a chance at living a meaningful life.

We often speak of "justice". This project, too, is in response to God's call to let justice roll down like rivers, and righteousness like never ending streams.

I hope that I have been able to give

you a "peek" into my life and work as your representative in mission overseas.

Please, remember the work of the UMN, and Asmita, in your prayers.

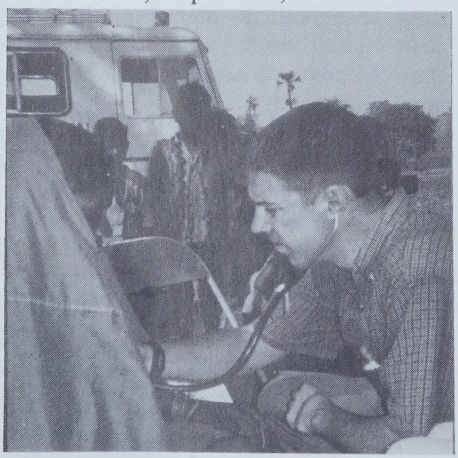
In Jesus' love,
Margaret

Margaret Vanderzweerde reports on her visit to Jobat where she was able to meet Jonathan Sherbino and observe his work. She accompanied Jonathan and the community health team as they visited several small villages outside of Jobat. She took the photograph below.

Jonathan Sherbino
India

Jonathan reported recently on his current activities:

I have been assisting weekly with the Community Health visits to rural villages. A team of nurses, village healthcare workers and doctors travel to villages within the Jobat Christian Hospital catchment area. These visits entail health education (ie. nutrition, postnatal care), antenatal check-ups and medical triage. Minor cases, if possible, are treated on site, with transportation of more serious cases to the hospital via 4X4 ambulance.



I have been granted an excellent opportunity to witness the means by which a centralized hospital has developed a successful education and satellite system. Recently, I went with Mercy Ravikant to Amkhut and Sardi. As the only "doctor" I saw close to 60 patients on my own. The overwhelming response, has sparked the possibility of sending one of the Jobat Christian Hospital physicians to this area on a monthly basis.

I have met with Dr. S. Kishan, the Director of the Synodical Board of Health Services. He was able to relate to me the challenges of delivering healthcare in a climate of burgeoning demands upon the system, occasional environmental disasters (ie. a recent drought in our region), and decreasing fiscal resources.

I continue to "assist" in all major procedures in the Operating Room. I have been involved in most any sort of procedure - save Orthopaedics - that can be performed from the bellybutton down.

I have also been active in the Outpatient Department. The variety of tropical diseases, and the advanced state of the pathologies presented, have provided me with a unique firsthand experience of medicine in the tropics.

I also assist in daily rounds of the hospital, with a special emphasis on the Obstetrical Ward.

Yours in Christ,
Jonathan Sherbino

Joy Randall
Taiwan

Joy Randall was presented with the Award for Medical Dedication to Taiwan by the Premier on April 29, 2000.

May 1999 - My sisters-in-law Brenda and Marlene and I went to Taipei on the 27th to meet with those being presented with the Award for Medical Dedication to Taiwan - 10 in all, from Italy, Belgium, Canada and Taiwan.

Friday we were up at six and off to see the President of ROC, Mr. Lee. I was the first to be presented and the first to speak, but Pres Lee was very talkative and praised our hospital and Skin Graph with Love Foundation. Lots of pictures were taken, and mine was in many newspapers.

When we visited the Premier I was again the first to speak. That night we had dinner with the government officals and those organizing this award.

At the ceremony on Saturday there was a representative from the General Assembly in Canada, the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, three missionaries-Betty Geddes, Carys Humphries and Marlene Buwalda, a bus load from our hospital and several from Eng Hok Church.

I was more nervous as the Premier Saiu was there to present the award to me. A lot of flowers were presented to me so I was really moved.

A dinner was held with the president and the award winners of the previous 10 years. Many earlier missionaries were there from Puli and Hualien and Taitung as the latter two hospitals are opening new additions etc in these two weeks.

The hospital there had a celebration for me, then on Tuesday the hospital here had a celebration and speeches and presentation of gifts and flowers. Eng Hok women's choir sang two pieces (one of which they made up the words especially for me) and gave me a gift of a ring with a ruby in it and flowers; our nurses' choir sang one piece. I received many other gifts - a lovely set of long pearls, a set of three strings of pearls, two brooches and two necklaces - one of a cross with diamonds; a picture of me with premier, blown up, one of Jesus and the children; a funny one of me drawn by one of the nurses!! and many flowers!

Both home and office are full of flowers, many lining the lobby of the hospital and the halls of the 10th floor. So it was most moving - a great encouragement for me to carry on!!

I appreciated hearing from so many friends and family in Canada. Thanks for all your support and prayers too.

Love, Joy

PRAYER REQUESTS:

Taiwan

1. For the new DPP president and cabinet and peace in Mainland China.

2. For continued blessings on Joy Randall and her medical work.

Kenya

1. For continued strength and joy to Adele Halliday as she ministers with mentally challenged children.

India/Nepal

1. That the many in India with physical diseases will find relief and comfort in Christian medical mission work.
2. For the work and witness of Jonathan Sherbino in Jobat Christian Hospital and in the rural villages.
3. For Asmita in her school work and daily challenges.
4. For the work of the United Mission to Nepal as it seeks to bring the light of the gospel among Nepali people.

NEWS

HINDU FUNDAMENTALIST THREAT - INDIA (Anto Akkara)

New Delhi, 2 February (ENI)-India's churches are becoming increasingly alarmed over the threat to the rights of religious minorities and to the traditionally secular fabric of Indian society.

Christians and other activists claim that Hindu fundamentalists are using their control of India's federal and various state governments to enthrone Hinduism as the de facto national religion and to suppress the rights of the nation's many religious minorities.

Three dozen activists, most of them Christians, took part in a candlelit vigil late on 30 January at the Gandhi Smruti (memorial) in New Delhi, built on the spot where Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated by a Hindu fanatic on 30 January 1948.

The vigil was organized by an ecumenical group, United Christian Forum for Human Rights (UCFHR), in cooperation with the Citizens Forum for Democracy. The activists were protesting at rising Hindu fundamentalism and decisions reducing minority rights in regions governed by the Hindu political party, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

The UCFHR said in a statement that the federal coalition government, which is dominated by the BJP, "has reneged on its commitments [made during the last election campaign - to uphold secularism and to protect the rights of minorities]. It is rapidly succeeding in its attempt at absolute Hindutvaisation [the promotion of Hindu nationalism] of the national educational and youth policy".

A week earlier, on 24 January, India's churches had made a similar protest in a joint statement expressing concern over "the growing communalization [dividing people on the basis of religion] of the nation, resulting in the erosion of human rights and increase of insecurity among the minorities".

The churches' statement was endorsed by the National Council of Churches in India (NCCI), the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of India (UELCI) and the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI).

ANGLICAN LEADER ISSUES LETTER ON COURT CASES (Ferdy Baglo)

Vancouver, 31 May (ENI)--In a letter read to all congregations of the Anglican Church of Canada on 28 May, the church's Primate, Archbishop Michael Peers, has outlined the financial crisis which may engulf the church because of hundreds of pending court cases.

"In this troubling time we are faced with litigation so costly as to change radically our structures and our life as a national church," Archbishop Peers wrote to his church's congregations. "Simply put: resulting from abuse in the [aboriginal] residential schools, there are over 1600 claims of varying kinds brought against the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada. About 100 cases involve the proven abuse of children, and the perpetrators are in prison. The costs of litigation and settlements for these alone is sufficient to exhaust all the assets of the General Synod and of some dioceses involved."

In an interview with ENI following release of his statement, Archbishop Peers discussed the possible bankruptcy of the church's General Synod, his insistence that the church's ministry would survive, and his church's wish to promote healing and reconciliation in a matter which is causing enormous problems for Canada's main churches. Should all pending cases reach settlement, awards could cost hundreds of

millions of dollars.

He told ENI that talks with the government were continuing to try to resolve the problem, but there was "no clear picture at the moment".

"One option is an agreement with the government which would see us do what we do best - namely, working around healing and reconciliation - and [let] litigation be the government's responsibility.

"Another option is that we would, when all our assets are expended, simply be bankrupt - not parishes, not congregations, not dioceses, but the General Synod."

"The government is co-defendant - the government ran all the schools. So if the church is unable to pay settlements - if we run out of money - then the government pays them all. That is true for all the churches."

As Archbishop Peers indicated, Anglicans are not facing the crisis alone. He told ENI: "The four churches who were involved in the schools work together around common problems. But there are significant structural and other differences among us. The Presbyterians, for instance, only had two schools."

An appeal has been filed in the one case that has been concluded. "Not to prevent the person from receiving the damages," the archbishop explained to ENI. "What is being appealed is the division of the damages between the government and the church. The [Anglican] Diocese of the Cariboo [which was involved in this case] has expended all its assets. The only thing left for them to expend are some properties that they own." (A date for the appeal hearing has yet to be set.)

NOT ALL RELIGIONS EQUAL - POPE (Luigi Sandri)

Rome, 4 February (ENI)--Pope John Paul II has declared that Jesus Christ is the "unique Saviour" of the universe, and the church is the "royal road" to salvation, unlike the "incomplete" religions of non-Christians.

The Pope's declaration on the supremacy of the Christian faith is being interpreted as a warning to liberal Catholic theologians who in recent decades have written of the validity of other mainstream faiths.

The Pope was speaking on 28 January to the cardinals, bishops and theologians who make up the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (the Vatican's guardian of dogma) at the end of a major meeting in Rome about "the uniqueness of Christ".

Pope John Paul, speaking in Italian, told the members of the congregation: "In recent years a mentality has emerged in theological and ecclesial circles which tends to relativize Christ's revelation and his unique and universal mediation in the order of salvation.

"In order to remedy this relativistic attitude, we must insist on the definitive and complete character of Christ's revelation... Therefore the theory of the limited character of the revelation of Christ, which can be complemented by other religions, is contrary to the faith of the church."

GUATELAMA'S POLICE CHARGE MILITARY OFFICERS (Paul Jeffrey)

Guatemala City, 11 February (ENI) - With the arrest of three military officers and the arrest - for the second time - of a Roman Catholic priest, Guatemalans are beginning to hope that they will at last find out who murdered Juan Gerardi, auxiliary bishop of Guatemala City and a prominent champion of human rights in this war-torn country.

The Catholic bishop's death almost two years ago has been a continuing course of controversy in this small Central American republic. Attempts to find the killers have failed amid accusations of military involvement in the murder and various judicial officials and witnesses have fled

the country fearing for their lives.

On 21 January, police arrested a former military intelligence officer, his son, and another former member of the Presidential Military Guard. All three were charged with murdering Bishop Gerardi on 26 April 1998.

NO EXCUSES IN ETHIOPIA (Paul Jeffrey)

Dubuluch, Ethiopia, 27 April (ENI)--More than 100 carefully-built rock cairns mark the new cemetery at the edge of this small, arid town in southern Ethiopia.

The new cemetery, set apart from the graves of the residents of this desert community, is for the many people who have died in recent weeks after migrating here in search of food, fleeing the ravages of a drought that now threatens to devastate the Horn of Africa with a deadly famine.

"...His Holiness will remind the faithful that those who have two coats should give up one, just as in the Gospel."

Sora Guyo is one of the new arrivals. The 45-year-old Oromo-speaking man is a pastoralist, an animal herder who roams through the arid landscape of southern Ethiopia's Great Rift Valley with his small herd of cattle and goats. He and his animals depend on seasonal rains, but for three years the rains haven't come. All 12 of Sora's cattle have died, and their carcasses litter the desert along with those of thousands of other animals.

Sora sleeps in a temporary camp at the foot of a nearby mountain with his wife and three children. He walks to town every day to sell a little firewood. Like most of the pastoralists who have migrated here, Sora is emaciated. With little hope left, he leans wearily on his staff. Even if the rain returns soon, his animals are gone and would take years to replace.

There is no widespread famine in Ethiopia, at least not yet. The images of starving children from the eastern Ethiopian town of Gode broadcast by CNN, the BBC and other media, are not representative of the whole country, according to relief workers. But millions of Ethiopians are on the edge of famine, and some communities are reduced to eating moss and leaves.

"If aid doesn't come in a timely manner, we're going to see a lot more Godes," declared Anne Bousquet, the Catholic Relief Services representative in Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital. "It will be a crime against humanity if we let hundreds of thousands of people die because there's not enough food here," Christian Balslev-Olesen, general secretary of DanChurchAid, said during a tour of the drought-stricken Borena region in the south of the country.

Relief officials had earlier estimated that 8 million Ethiopians would need food assistance this year, but they now warn that continued failure of the seasonal rains may add another 2.6 million people to the list.

"To feed that many people will cost around one-third of a billion dollars. That's about what we spent on one day of NATO bombing during the war in Kosovo," Balslev-Olesen declared to ENI. "Ethiopia has the infrastructure in place, a very good monitoring system, experienced non-governmental organizations, and a very organized society at a local level. There's no excuse for the international community to let people die here."

While most of the JRP's work depends on outside financial support, Ethiopians are also contributing their share. According to Asmamaw Belay, who is in charge of relief efforts for the Ethiopian Orthodox Church,

the church's patriarch, Abuna Paulos, will call on church members to contribute to church-sponsored relief work.

"...His Holiness will remind the faithful that those who have two coats should give up one, just as in the Gospel," Asmamaw said. (The Ethiopian Orthodox Church is the country's biggest church, with about 19 million members, a third of the total population, according to the World Churches Handbook, published in London.)

BOESAK JAILED IN CAPE TOWN (Noel Bruyns)

East London, South Africa, 15 May (ENI)- Former anti-apartheid activist Allan Boesak this morning reported to a Cape Town prison to start a three-year sentence for theft and fraud.

The former clergyman - who in the 1980s was widely respected by churches and ecumenical organizations world-wide that poured money into his anti-apartheid fund - will live in a communal cell, with no special privileges, according to the prison authorities.

Friday, 12 May, the Supreme Court of Appeal sentenced Boesak to three years in prison for financial irregularities while he was director of the now-defunct foundation for Peace and Justice (FPJ) which had been set up to finance anti-apartheid activities and help victims of South Africa's racist policies in the 1980s.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, former Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town, Nobel Peace laureate and a colleague of Boesak in the anti-apartheid struggle, expressed, in a statement on Saturday 13 May, his "deep distress" at the prospect of the former pastor and moderator of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church serving a prison sentence.

POPE RETRACES JESUS' FOOTSTEPS (Ross Dunn)

Jerusalem, 22 March (ENI)--Pope John Paul II realized a long-held dream - to retrace the footsteps of Jesus.

The pontiff arrived in Israel from Jordan on March 21 on the first visit by a pope to the Holy Land in 36 years, hoping that his spiritual pilgrimage would help to heal the divisions between Arabs and Jews. He visited the traditional sites of Christ's path from birth through to baptism, crucifixion and resurrection.

His tour of the holiest sites in Christianity was part of the Vatican's celebrations for the 2000th anniversary of the birth of Jesus. But in the volatile Middle East, where religion, history and politics are deeply entwined, Arabs and Jews analyzed the Pope's every word in search of nuances and political implications.

No one knows this better than the Pope himself, who in the 1960s, as an archbishop, spent 10 days touring the Holy Land. His diary reveals that the Holy Land both inspired and disturbed him as he witnessed the religious and political disputes which have scarred the land where Jesus was born.

In Jerusalem on 23 March Pope John Paul II spoke out in remembrance of the six million Jews who died in the Holocaust, praying that a new relationship between Christians and Jews would be born from "sorrow over this tragedy".

To reinforce its importance to him, he spoke of his childhood in Poland and of Jewish friends lost in the Holocaust.

TAIWANESE PRESIDENT VISITS TAIWAN CHURCH OFFICE

The general secretary of Taiwan's biggest Protestant church, the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT), called on Christians world-wide to pray that the national elections - which swept the Kuomintang (KMT) president from power - will usher in a new era for the island in which its sovereignty will be respected by the world

community, especially the People's Republic of China, which is just 130 kilometres away.

William J. K. Lo was speaking to ENI by telephone shortly after Taiwan's president-elect, Chen Shui-bian, a lawyer from the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), visited the PCT's headquarters in the capital, Taipei, to thank the PCT for what Lo called its support for "democratic and human rights, and nationhood".

The PCT has long been in the forefront of campaigning for Taiwanese independence and human rights on the island, which has been ruled for 50 years by the KMT. Many of the PCT's members and leaders have been imprisoned for campaigning against the harsh rule of the KMT, which has often attempted to crush dissent, and Chen Shui-bian has defended many members of the PCT in court.

Although Taiwan has in effect functioned as an independent country for decades, both China and the KMT have maintained a "One China" policy, according to which Taiwan is part of China - though the two sides both maintained they were the rightful rulers of "One China".

Lo told ENI that the DPP victory on Saturday signaled that the rivalry between China and Taiwan was now over.

"This conflict [between the Communists and the KMT] has nothing to do with Taiwan," Lo said. "The KMT was from China, and it was China-oriented, but now the new government [in Taipei] is Taiwan-oriented. We elected Chen to show that there is no conflict between China and Taiwan. It is my prayer that Beijing will now change its attitude towards the Taiwanese people, and will respect our sovereignty and identity. We need the prayers of the whole ecumenical movement to understand that this island of 23 million people has a new government for a new era."

The PCT has 220,000 members, and is a member of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the World Council of Churches, both based in Geneva. (Adapted from ENI report by Edmund Doogue)

MISSION STUDY NEWS

Cuba's Protestant churches intend to play an important "intermediary" role in what are expected to be imminent years of change and transition within Cuba, according to the new general secretary of the Cuban Council of Churches (CCC).

Speaking on 19 April at a public forum at New York's Interchurch Center, three days before federal officials seized Elian Gonzalez from his Miami relatives to reunite him with his father, Reinerio Arce, a Presbyterian, singled out the Gonzalez case as an example of how churches in Cuba, working with ecumenical partners in the US, had been able to bring Cubans and Americans together amid continuing hostility between Washington and Havana.

During the initial stages of the custody battle over the six-year-old Cuban, the CCC and the US National Council of Churches had worked together as intermediaries, boosting efforts to unite with his father.

"The church has been the only bridge between Cuba and the United States," said Arce, adding that "churches will continue to have an important role in the transformation of Cuban society."

"We have to begin to address what our relations will be after the [US economic] blockade is lifted," he said, adding that US churches still work towards ending the blockade.

The Cuban Council of churches, founded in 1941, now has 25 member denominations as well as 11 affiliated organizations.

For years the Cuban government curtailed the activities of churches. But in the

past decade, Cuba's churches have been experiencing a rebirth and greater liberty. Last year the CCC's study centre estimated the 300,000 Protestants and 280,000 Roman Catholics worshipped regularly. (ENI)

GUILD OF ORGANISTS

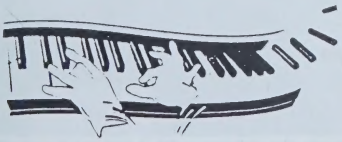
New York (April 3, 2000) - The American Organist Magazine, the official journal of the American Guild of Organists, invites churches to take advantage of its "Positions Available" department. A regular feature of the magazine, these monthly listings are free of charge to employing institutions and are read by those seeking positions in the church music field.

The American Organist Magazine is the world's most widely read organ and choral journal and is mailed to the complete circulation list of 24,000 members of the American Guild of Organists and the Royal Canadian College of Organists.

Position listings are free of charge and may be sent to Todd Sisley, fax: 212-870-2163; e-mail: <tsisley@agohq.org>. The deadline is the 15th of the second preceding month (May 15th is the deadline for the July issue).

For those employing institutions that want immediate coverage, the American Guild of Organists offers postings on their web site for a monthly fee of $25. The address is <www.agohq.org>.

For more information, contact The American Organist Magazine at 212-870-2310. Todd Sisley, Editorial Assistant, The American Organist Magazine, 475 Riverside Dr., Suite 1260, New York, NY



IN THE SOCIETY

SYNODICAL

Our Vision for God's Children was the theme for the 86th Annual Meeting of the Synodical of **British Columbia** held at Richmond Church, Richmond, BC on March 24th and 25th. The opening worship was led by Rev. Tony Plomp assisted by associate minister Jim Walton. Scripture was Philippians 2: 1-14, the Meditation called "Working it Out".

Rev. Betty McLagan, Synodical President, welcomed everyone. Business and reports were followed with a talk and slide presentation by Rev. Elizabeth Forrester on her visit with Glen Inglis and family in Malawi in 1999.

Three workshops were offered: A Bible Study "Seeking the Constant Amidst Whirlpool" led by Rev. Sylvia Cleland, using Philippians 2: 1-17; "Understanding the Flames Initiative" led by Rev. Wayne Stretch; "Resources: What We Have and How to Use Them" led by Janet Tremblay.

Workshop on Saturday morning was led by Laurie Jackson who read from Luke 24: 2-35, "The Walk to Emmaus".

"Highlights of her trip to Bangkok" were shared by Joanne Instance who also conducted the Installation of Officers. The new President is Betty Siverns.

The Service of Remembrance was presented by Amy Chwojka.

PRESBYTERIAL

Brockville Presbyterial met at Knox Church, Iroquois, March 23, 2000. President Henny Donkersteeg welcomed everyone and introduced guest speaker June Stevenson.

Worship was led by Mary Campbell, Vera Dickie and Audrey Sine, Brockville First Church WMS.

- June Stevenson, centre, with Dorothy Fresque, left, President and Jean Baudoux, Secretary, St. Andrew's, Kingston. June also visited Brockville Presbyterial and other groups in Eastern Ontario.

June Stevenson, editor of Glad Tidings and author of "Sharing God's Mission Together", gave her impressions of Cuba after a two-week exposure tour. Slides helped us glimpse some of her experiences.

June gathered facts on how the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba, along with other churches, has continued to seek social justice during difficult times.

Lorraine Dobbie extended courtesies and special appreciation to June for adding to our understanding.

President of Council Executive, Mary Moorhead, brought greetings from Council and closed with prayer.

The Annual Meeting of the **Kingston** Presbyterial was held at St. Andrew's Church, Kingston on April 8th, 2000. Sixty-eight members were warmly welcomed on a cold, very wet day.

Rev. Lincoln Bryant brought greetings and Dorothy Fresque, President of the local WMS, welcomed the members.

Worship was led by Louise Axford. Referring to the encounter in scripture between Philip and the Ethiopian, she set the atmosphere of "Mission Awareness" for the meeting.

Lyla Page, President of the Presbyterial conducted the business. The annual reports were presented, using posters and albums.

Rev. Lynda Reid showed the video "Stewardship by Design" and led in discussion on the responsibility of the individual and the Presbyterial as stewards.

The memorial service was led by Elva English and Gail Collett from St. John's Church. Their group had sustained a great loss in the sudden passing of Mrs. Margaret Irwin, a former Presbyterial president.

Members visited the book display prepared by Audrie Cossar and Marnie Forrest.

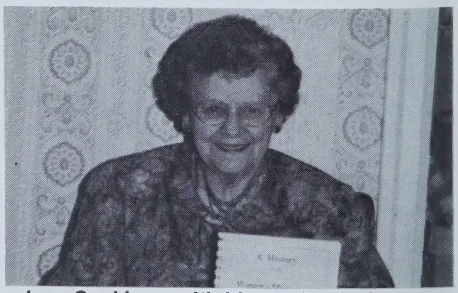
The afternoon session was recalled with singing led by Brenda Carew, St. Andrew's. Rev. Lynda Reid then shared her experiences in Brazil, illustrating her visit with slides. Lyla Page was recognized for her loyalty and devotion to the Presbyterial for the past three years as president.

Lucille MacDonald and Barbara Best, Sand Hills, WMS conducted the closing worship service.

Thanks and courtesies were extended by Kay Moores. Christine Self gave the nominating committee report. Following this Rev. Lynda Reid installed the officers, welcoming the new President, Judith MacLeod and her executive.

The 84th Annual Meeting of **Prince Albert** Presbyterial was held in St. Paul's, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. Theme of the meeting was *Celebrate.*

Special guest and speaker was Mary Moorhead, President of Council Executive.



- Jean Cockburn with history book she authored.

Other out-of-town guests taking part were Margaret Wilson, area resource person, and Bernice Shih, Co-ordinator of the Saskatchewan Core Committee.

Isabell Bannister, Presbyterial president conducted the devotions and business. Jean Cockburn gave comments on her book, "A History of the Women's Missionary Society in Saskatchewan".

Presbyterial officers for the coming year were installed by Mary Moorhead.

The 86th Annual of **Edmonton Peace River** Presbyterial was held at Millwoods Church, Edmonton, on March 25.

President Norma Proudfoot gave the theme for the meeting: *Forth in Thy Name, O Lord I go.* Devotions were by the Westmount Group. Irene Colquhon read John 2:1-11.

Ways of promoting the WMS were discussed. Lunch was served by the Millwoods Group. Grace was by Margaret Moar. Later Rev. Kenneth Wheaton gave words of welcome.

Mary Seitz, Moderator of Edmonton Presbytery, was the special speaker. She emphasized that we should give special attention to youth and children in our churches. Ann Paterson thanked the speaker.

Closing worship was the reading of a Bible verse by each person present. It was agreed that the offering be directed to flood victims in Mozambique. The President closed the meeting with a short prayer.

Hamilton Presbyterial was welcomed to St. Columba Church by Rev. Bradley and Gloria McAvoy, celebrating the 114th Annual Meeting. In the absence of the retiring President, Evelyn Murdoch, Jesse Knox constituted the meeting. The opening worship set the tone for the day, "Thanks be to God".

Special speaker, Dr. Patricia Dutcher-Walls of Knox College, quickly set everyone to work, garnering input and the exchange of ideas from people without them realizing they were participants in a lecture about Christian Education in our church today.

The morning's session included fellowship, praise, singing, book reviews, treasurer's report, brainstorming on fundraising for mission and luncheon prepared by the men and women from the Board and Session of St. Columba.

Following a time of remembering members who had died during the year, the annual reports, prepared by the Executive were presented in the format of the TV program, "Who Wants to be a Millionaire?".

The election and installation of new officers featured rules for elected officers selected from Bible passages. Newly elected president, Jesse Knox, closed in prayer.

A New Beginning was the theme for the 85th Annual Meeting of **East Toronto** Presbyterial held in Willowdale Church, February 26.

Following a hymn sing led by Joan Neilson with Lorna Teare at the piano, Convenor Giollo Kelly welcomed everyone. Greetings were brought by the Presidents of Pickering, Oak Ridges and West Toronto Presbyterials. On behalf of the host church, Lorna Teare welcomed everyone and presented the devotions with Marjorie Douglas.

Following business, Rev. Heather Jones gave a lively review of her work in Malawi. A time of prayer followed, focusing on African concerns.

Jean Rankine conducted the In Memoriam service, giving thanks for the lives and service of fifteen faithful WMS members.

Area staff person, Rev. Lynda Reid conducted the Installation of Officers and also the closing worship.

Rev. Walter Hearn closed the meeting with the benediction.

The 86th Annual Meeting of **Montreal** Presbyterial was held at Knox Crescent Kensington and First Church, Montreal on March 18. President Grace Thornley-Brown presided. Peggy Wegrich gave the history of the church which began as a mission in 1898.

Worship was led by Nancy Carle who spoke from 1st and 2nd Timothy and Titus about the order of widows and the leadership of Miriam. Soloist was Judy Pemberton.

Following business, an exercise break was led by Peggy Wegrich.

Guest speaker was Dorcas Gordon, principal of Knox College. Her theme was Spring Cleaning: Sorting out the junk from the treasure.

Following lunch and a singalong, a panel consisting of Druse Bryan, Barbara Duguid and Bonnie Mason spoke of "Women in the 21st Century".

Lois Klempa gave the report of the nominating committee and Dorcas Gordon installed the officers for 2000-2001.

Special guests at the Annual Meeting of **Superior** Presbyterial were Mary Moorhead, President of Council Executive and Ina Borger, Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Synodical President. Lakeview Church women hosted a potluck luncheon on March 6 which was followed by the meeting. The main topic of concern was how to carry on without a president.

Mary Moorhead gave a brief history of Mission Societies in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, stressing that the need for mission is still very much with us.

Ruth George reported on the joint mission study "Sharing God's Mission Together". Members of three of the local churches, Lakeview, St. Andrew's and First have attended monthly afternoon sessions, each taking responsibility for pre[illegible]ion.

Rev. Gwen Ament, Lakeview, who provided opening and Remembrance worship, was also thanked for the attractive programs she had prepared.

Essex-Kent Presbyterial held their Annual Meeting at St. Andrew's, Lakeshore on March 15. Rev. Chuck Congram welcomed members to this beautiful new church. St. Andrew's, Windsor conducted the devotions and the memorial service.

President Ruth Smith constituted the meeting. Following reports and book reviews, area staff Erin Crisfield led the group in a study of Jubilee. The video "A Matter of Interest" was followed by lively discussion.

Speaker for the afternoon was former deaconess Muriel (Judd) Brown of Windsor. Her travels took her, among other places, to Val d'Or, Montreal, the United States and campgrounds along the Alaska highway.

Erin Crisfield installed the officers for 2000-2001.

The theme of **Saskatoon** Presbyterial Annual Meeting held at St. Andrew's, Saskatoon, was *2 Corinthians 4.*

President Merle McGowan welcomed the women and introduced guest speaker, Mary Moorhead, President of Council Executive.

A singalong with Terry Folster, and a mission video and discussion by Margaret Wilson, area staff for Saskatchewan, were enjoyed.

Following business, closing worship was led by St. Andrew's WMS.

A warm welcome was extended by Florence Fennell to members of **Lindsay** Presbyterial as they met at Knox, Cannington on March 22. Linda Grace, President, constituted the meeting.

Worship, conducted by Woodville PW,

followed the theme: *Spring and Friendship, especially with Jesus.*

Following business, a discussion concerning a combined meeting of Lindsay-Peterborough Presbytery and Lindsay and Peterborough Presbyterials, resulted in a motion to complete the date and place for this assembly at the Spring Rally.

A WMS member for 60 years, Mrs. Florence Francis of Cannington, was wished a happy birthday.

Linda Grace adjourned the meeting with prayer.

The 86th Annual Meeting of **Westminster** Presbyterial was held on February 16 in New Westminster, BC.

Rev. Dr. Ted Siverns, minister of First Church led the opening worship service.

Barbara Marshall, President, presided over the meeting which began with business and annual reports. Following lunch, Margaret Walker, at the piano, led in a hymn sing.

Sheila Jakus led a short service of remembrance.

Guest speaker was Rev. David Stewart from the Upper Room Ministry in Victoria. His interesting talk emphasized the changes in the lives of those who find refuge in the mission house. His own life has been touched by his fellowship with those who live in difficult situations.

Wayne Stretch, Pastoral and Program Director of Synod/Synodical installed the officers for 2000-2001.

LOCAL

The members of **Knox** WMS, **St. Thomas,** lost a respected and valued member with the passing on March 6, 2000 of **Fran Hubert.**

Fran was involved with WMS for approximately 40 years. She was one of the founders of the Agnes Gollan Mission Circle in Alma Street Presbyterian Church several years ago, and their first President. At one point Fran was instrumental in arranging for Agnes Gollan to speak at Alma Street Church. She received a life membership pin from Knox WMS.

She was a long time member of the choir at Alma Street and later of Knox Church, Chairperson of Knox Music Committee and on the Christian Education Committee of Knox. The Girl Guides of Canada, South St. Thomas District was very fortunate to have her as their Treasurer for many years.

Whatever group or committee Fran was involved with, you knew she would serve it well. She brought humour into every thing she did. Fran will be greatly missed.

Bertha Ingram of **St. Andrew's** Presbyterian Church, **Maple**, Ontario passed away in November 1999. Bertha had been a member of the congregation for more than 50 years and a Life Member in the WMS.

Bertha's tireless dedication to, and enthusiasm for the work of the WMS, was so typical of the spirit that permeates this mission group. Her quiet, efficient manner, her confidence in the kitchen, her talent for sewing, knitting and quilting, were all gifts she used freely to serve others.

Although she did not see herself as a leader, Bertha was the epitome of leaders, for she led by quiet example, ever an enthusiastic supporter of the WMS.

Bertha was a woman of faith who knew Christ as her Saviour. This faith guided her in her role as wife, mother and grandmother, and extended to include young women and children in her church family.

Bertha was a shining example of the type of women who make up the WMS across Canada, a blessing and inspiration to all.

The **Hildur Hermanson Auxiliary** WMS. of **St. Andrew's** Presbyterian Church, Saskatoon have lost two valued members: **Margaret Campbell** died January 25, 2000. Margaret obtained her BSc and BEd degrees at University of Saskatchewan and enjoyed a long career in teaching. Margaret was a long time member of St. Andrew's and an elder for many years. She was active in the choir, Church School, Christian Education Committee, Memorial Committee and the Women's Missionary Society. The library which she organized and maintained for many years will be named in her memory. She was a dedicated and beloved member of our WMS.

Ina Watson died on April 3, 2000. Ina had a long career in nursing culminating in her position as Professor of Nursing at the University of Saskatchewan for over 20 years. Ina was a dedicated member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church and active in the Women's League. Ina was devoted to her extended family as a caregiver. Ina will be remembered for her dedication and strong support for mission and our WMS.

At an open meeting at **Knox's Galt** Evening Auxiliary on March 27, attended by members from three neighbouring WMS groups, Rev. Heather Jones described her work in Malawi. Through a game, "Time is precious," she demonstrated the problems and great difficulties in trying to feed and educate a family in Malawi. Because of the devaluation of

CIRCULATION NEWS

Katherine Allen
Circulation Manager

When promoting the Glad Tidings magazine, do people think of it only as a women's magazine? Or for those who are part of a WMS group? Do you have ideas about how to inform people that the magazine is for every one?

There are so many different ways of promoting the Glad Tidings magazine. These might include using excerpts from the magazine in your church newsletter or Sunday bulletin (using appropriate credit); giving a year's subscription to new members of your congregation, Sunday School teachers, program leaders, minister, or a young person who has an interest in the mission of the church. Or, order an extra subscription to give to a shut-in or to put in your church library. One group included a copy of the magazine with the church bulletin as a way of promoting it to everyone in the congregation.

This is a good time of year to begin to prepare for promoting the magazine for the fall. We can supply up to 50 copies free, of the Glad Tidings for promotional purposes. Please contact the Glad Tidings office indicating the number of copies and name of congregation.

Remember also to let us know of any changes to Glad Tidings secretary/contact person for your congregation by mid-July. Remember, you don't have to belong to a WMS group to subscribe to the Glad Tidings.

their money (50%), everything of necessity is expensive.

Heather is shown in the photograph (left) with Christina Lunn, president of Knox's Galt Evening Auxiliary.

ANNIVERSARY

Elmvale WMS celebrated their 100th birthday in 1999. Down through the years the WMS have packed bales for home mission and abroad, made quilts, collected books, made treats and visited shut-ins, supported children's groups, visited nursing homes, and always made their mission allocation.

On the last Sunday in June, families of all known former members joined in our service of remembrance.

Six life memberships were given through gifts to the following: Edythe Cook, Hyasinter Deogratsias, Aili Hilden, June Ritchie, Marion Sallach and Olive Wilson.

A linden tree was planted in front of the church as a living memorial to past members. The dedication address was given by

Elizabeth Hill whose grandmothers were both early members. Scripture was read by Rev. Fairlie Ritchie whose family were also early members. Guest speaker was Dr. Donald McKillican. At a delightful luncheon, Margaret Hill (above), our oldest member at 93, cut the anniversary cake.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Mrs. Olive Currie
Jean Stewart
Ailsa Craig, ON

Agnes Agar
Nashville, Bolton, ON

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St. Andrew's, Dresden, ON

Mrs. Fraser (Ivy) Gordon
St. James, Forest, ON

Mrs. Earl (Jean) Makey
Hagersville, ON

Grace Cranston
Mary Fyfe
Janet Adams
St. Andrew's, Hanover, ON

Zelta Sullivan
St. Andrew's, King City, ON

Mrs. Marion Beck
St. George's, London, ON

Mrs. Walter (Kathleen) Elliott
Lucknow, ON

Bertha Ingram
St. Andrew's, Maple, ON

Mildred MacLennan
St. Andrew's, Newmarket, ON

Mrs. Earl (Mary) Weaver
Chippawa, Niagara Falls, ON

Ella Rowden
First, North Pelham, ON

Mrs. E. Dawson
Hopedale, Oakville, ON

Vera Bartley
Rexdale, ON

Margaret Campbell
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Knox, Sooke, BC

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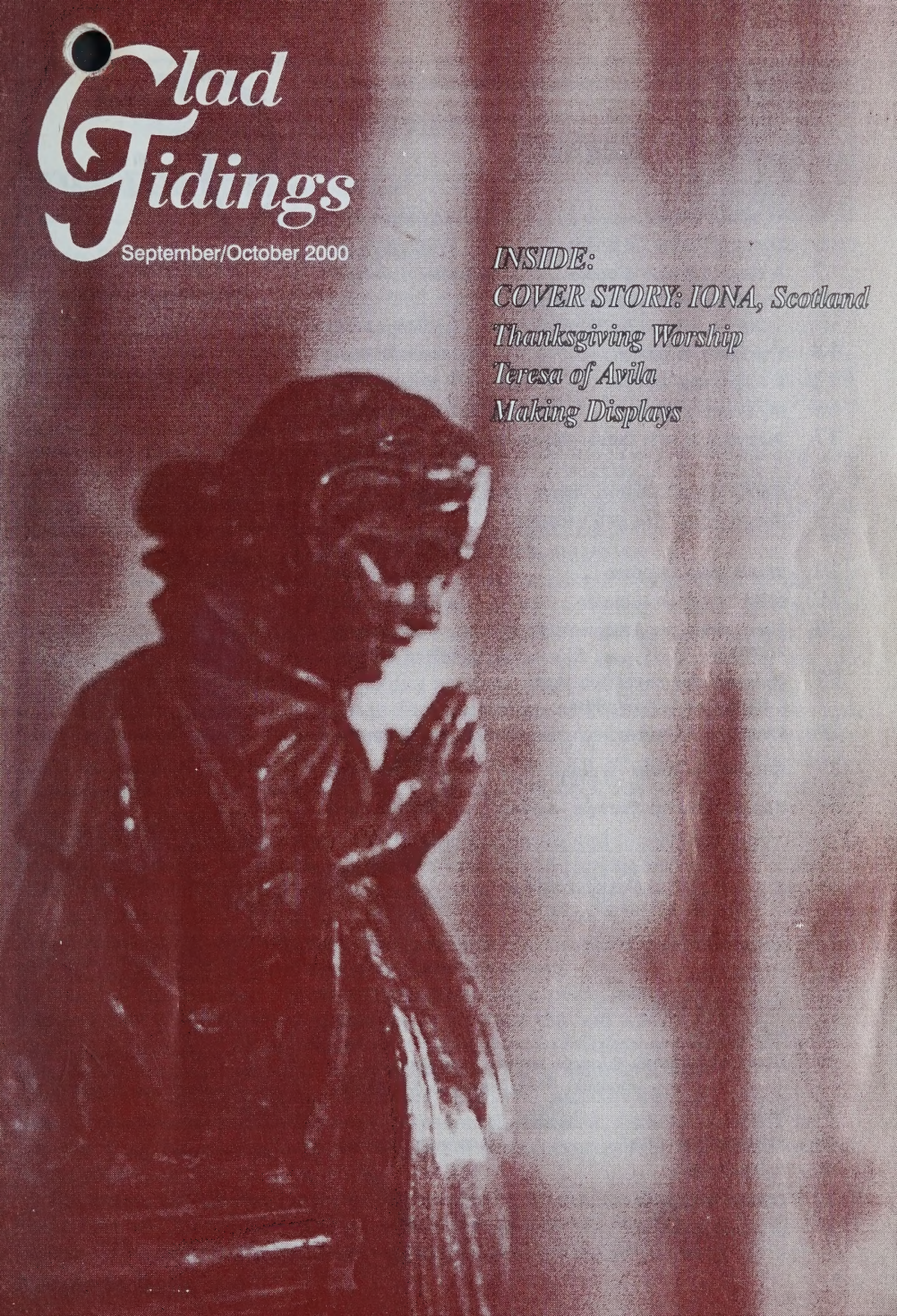

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GLAD TIDINGS reports on aspects of the Women's Missionary Society on all levels.

GLAD TIDINGS challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally and internationally.

GLAD TIDINGS through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired and motivated to action.

GLAD TIDINGS provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS (WD) or by the Editor.

Written in Love

L. June Stevenson, Editor

When Politics and People Don't Mix

September 2000

I don't consider myself a political person. I do sit up, however, and take notice when politics threatens the lives of ordinary people. Iraq is now in a category with the gravest humanitarian disasters of the 20th century. UNICEF estimates "that from 1990 to 1997, 1.2 million Iraqis died due to lack of food and medicine, including 750,000 children. The toll has since been projected to 1.5 million deaths, to October 1999". Haroon Siddiqui, *Toronto Star,* February 3, 2000.

President Saddam Hussein is the target in the decade-long United Nations-imposed embargo. But the 20 million citizens of Iraq are the real victims. A growing group of churches, non-governmental organizations, peace activist and citizen groups in Canada and the United States are protesting that the embargo has not only resulted in many deaths but is threatening to destroy a 6,000-year-old civilization.

The history of the ancient city of Babylon which contains such items as the first examples of writing and the first wheel, is at risk. The so-called "sanctions" have not achieved the effect of destabililizing the Iraqi regime or of making the region safer. Groups are hopeful that the Canadian government will exercise leadership on this issue, particularly as Canada now holds a position on the UN Security Council.

The burden on the Iraqi people includes spending 80% of family income on food, massive deterioration in basic infrastructure, particularly in the water supply and waste disposal systems, and a decline in school enrollment for all ages. The dinar (Iraqi currency) was worth approximately three US dollars in 1990. Today it takes 1,500 dinars to purchase one dollar.

"Prior to the Gulf War, Iraq had the highest health and nutritional indices in the Eastern Mediterranean region, according to the World Health Organization's regional office in Alexandria, Egypt." *Compassion Iraq,* an ad hoc coalition of churches based in the US.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is part of Inter-Church Action (ICA), a Canadian coalition that supports efforts to separate economic and military sanctions, urging particularly the rapid end of economic sanctions.

The political process is painstakingly slow. While politicians argue over ways and means, some Canadians are working quietly to see that aid reaches the demoralized population of Iraq. Through the Middle East Council of Churches and the Mennonite Central Committee located in Baghdad, relief is being made available.

An ICA delegation to Iraq, planned for May 2000, was cancelled at the last minute when visas were denied by the Iraqi government. The visit, planned to assess the toll on the Iraqi people and the availability of humanitarian aid, is rescheduled for mid-October.

Politics should not stand in the way of human dignity. Let us ask ourselves what Jesus would do, and how God is calling the churches to respond. Pray for our brothers and sisters there, many of them Christian, and pray that a just solution will be found.

Teresa of Avila

The last great woman mystic of the Middle Ages. Final article in a series of articles on early women who influenced Christian thought.

by Maria Stam

One of the greatest women mystics of the end of the Middle Ages was Teresa of Avila. Much has been written about her, but the most in-depth biography was published in 1984. The writer, Victoria Lincoln, introduces us to a human Teresa with struggles and conflicts common to all of us.

Saints often used to be described as perfect human beings who seemed not to be troubled by frailty and weaknesses. Teresa was a very courageous woman. She could achieve her goal as a reformer only with great passion and determination in the patriarchal society of her time that did not value intelligent, assertive women.

Born on March 28, 1515, in Castile, Spain, Teresa came from a partly Jewish background. This circumstance made it especially difficult for her to accomplish her task since antisemitism was widespread in Spain during the period. As a young girl Teresa enjoyed reading romance novels, dressing in fine clothes and wearing jewellry. Her mother died when she was fourteen. At sixteen, her father, unable to control his lively daughter, sent her to a convent. But after eighteen months he had to take her home again because of illness.

Teresa's charming personality attracted many friends. While on the one hand she liked to be admired, on the other she felt guilty and thought of herself as a sinner, calling herself Mary Magdalene. The idea that she could be saved if she would become a nun, led her to enter *The Incarnation*, a Carmelite Convent in Avila on November 2, 1536. She accepted the name Teresa of Jesus. But the place was not as protective as she had expected.

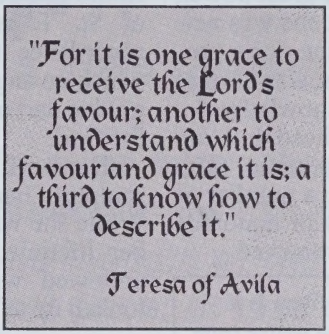
Convents during her time were more open to worldly things - nuns could come and go as they pleased, and male visitors were always welcome for conversations and parties. Teresa, outgoing and good looking, was susceptible to flattery and tempted by the liberal attitude around her.

After a long illness that began in 1538 and lasted until her sudden recovery in April 1542, she had trouble praying. God seemed to be distant. She became interested in mental or meditative prayer, hoping that it would be the right kind of prayer for her. Still she found it difficult to concentrate and complained that "her imagination was too dull for religious thoughts."

Once she was able to harness her will her praying improved. In her book *Interior Castle* she says, "Meditation proper begins with the will." In her autobiography *Life* she writes: "For a long time even God favoured me, I did not know what words to use to explain His favours; and this was no small trial." Then she adds: "For it is one grace to receive the Lord's favour;

another to understand which favour and grace it is; a third to know how to describe it."

During Lent of 1554 Teresa experienced a conversion. While praying she saw the suffering Christ and clearly felt the Lord's presence. Sometimes she became so overwhelmed by her love for God that she experienced raptures that lifted her whole body from the ground. Her friends thought her ecstasies were sent by the devil. But Teresa was convinced they came from the Lord. On one occasion she heard a voice telling her not to listen to humans but to angels. It was then that her humanity met the divine and Teresa became a mystic.


"For it is one grace to receive the Lord's favour; another to understand which favour and grace it is; a third to know how to describe it."
Teresa of Avila

In her writings she uses metaphors to describe the meaning of prayer. Prayers are like water in a well used to nourish the flowers (our virtues) in the garden (our soul). Sometimes the well can dry out. "What will the gardener do?" Teresa asks and then answers, "He will be glad and take heart and consider it the greatest of favour to work in the garden of so great an Emperor."

With the deepening of her spirituality, she became convinced the Carmelite Order needed to be reformed. Personally, she longed for a simpler lifestyle. Yet voicing her opinion created enemies, and even her confessor advised her to give up the plan. But Teresa remained determined. She asked Pope Pius IV for permission to open a house of Discalced (barefoot) Carmelites dedicated to St. Joseph.

When in February 1562 permission was granted, she purchased with borrowed money and donations a little house and moved in with three nuns on August 17. A day later the city council evicted them and they had to go back to their Convent. In December she was allowed to return to St. Joseph and to take four nuns with her.

The idea of the Discalced Carmelite Order was founded on a life of poverty and simplicity. Habits were made of coarse material and not of fine woven serge as the habits of the other Carmelites. The rules were strict and their meals frugal. Teresa's reformation faced many difficulties. She encountered intrigues, betrayals, and slanders. She was called a heretic, fake, and a runaway nun. The Inquisition (Counter Reformation) was trying to lay hands on her writings.

Teresa understood how to handle troublesome situations, and when the Inquisitor wanted to confiscate her autobiography, she let it fall into the hands of the Princes of Eboli who promptly betrayed her and reported it. Fortunately, Teresa had friends in high places; they made sure that the book was delivered to King Philip II who kept it in his library.

Once Teresa had started to open new convents, she never stopped. She crossed Spain, enduring ice and snow in winter and heat in the summer in search of places for the establishment of Discalced Carmelite convents for women and men. After founding five more houses she wrote *The Foundation*.

Interventions from worldly as well as church authorities often disrupted her work. Experiences taught her, "To do any good one must accept the world as it is." She kept on learning and

experimenting, admitting, "Nothing can be learned without a little trouble."

In spite of opposition Teresa opened many Carmelite convents in Spain until the end of her life. Gradually thousands of similar houses were established throughout the world. She was not only recognized as a religious person, but as a lively, mystical writer of great power. Teresa acknowledged that she was neither an academic theologian nor a professional writer, but she emphasizes that her experiences and knowledge "... do not come from my head but my heavenly Master tells them to me" (*Life* 39, 8). Her five books and a number of smaller works together with hundreds of her letters have been preserved.

- Maria Stam is a freelance writer from London, ON. She is the author of several books, numerous articles and poems.

She died on October 4, 1582 at the house of a friend while travelling. Pope Gregory XV canonized Teresa on March 12, 1622. Like Catherina of Siena she too was awarded the title of "Doctor of the Church" by Pope Paul VI on October 4, 1970.

In the Chapel Santa Maria Vitoria in Rome one can see a life-size sculpture of St. Teresa in ecstasy, created in accordance to one of her visions in which an angel pierced her heart with a golden dart as an expression of her love for God.

The work was created by the Italian sculptor Gian Lorenzo Benini in 1645. While she was not treated fairly during her lifetime, after her death she was endowed with honours, and people looked up to her in awe and admiration.

Reference:
Teresa of Avila, The Autobiography of Teresa of Avila with a new introduction by Benedicta Ward, Doubleday, New York, 1991;

Victoria Lincoln, Teresa: A Woman, a biography, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1984.

Evening Prayer

I light the candle
Watch the wick become live flame.
My scattered thoughts dance
As shadows on the wall
Then settle to a steady glow.
Holy presence calms
In silence
Purple peace
Enfolds.

Gwyneth Bell

A Time to Reap

I call to mind from other times
The summer sun on tree and field.
I had no thought of wet or dry
Or market price, or loss of yield.
Long days of childhood warm and bright,
No shadow there of coming harm;
Of rest and dreamless sleep at night
That followed toil and recreation on the farm.

Now many years have passed their way
And life has taught her lessons well -
That rains will come, and suns will shine
In ways that humans cannot tell.
So, cheer up, farmers as you toil
In hay and bean and corn and stubble;
Through ancient promise you will know
Reward abundant for your trouble.

Audrey Hutcheson

THANKSGIVING WORSHIP SERVICE

Let us, Also, Give Thanks!

by Bernice Shih

Call to Worship (Psalm 100 - read responsively):

L: Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the lands!
P: Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into His presence with singing!
L: Know that the Lord is God! It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.
P: Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and His courts with praise!
L: Give thanks to Him, bless His name!
P: For the Lord is good: His steadfast love endures for ever, and His faithfulness to all generations.

Hymn #457 (1997 Book of Praise) Now thank we all our God (#103 1972 BOP)

Scripture Read Psalm 8

Meditation

(Needed for the following meditation are one large candle, and six small boxes wrapped in colorful rainbow paper and labeled accordingly - *Courage to Take Risks; Potential of the Child Within; Wisdom to lead my people; Forgiveness and Acceptance; Freedom; Faith to be Persistent.*)

Leader: (Light the one candle on the table.)
In the beginning God created the world and God loved the Creation. But the choice of giving people freedom returned to haunt God. Many people were aware of God's faithfulness and turned to Him in faith and thanksgiving. Others continually turned from God's ways to their own. Consequently they got into many difficulties. But God never gave up on the people.

Reader 1: Moses' Mother (Exodus 2)
I am a daughter of Levi, married to a man from the house of Levi, and living under Egyptian domination. Life became unbearable when Pharaoh sent out the decree that our midwives, Shiphrah and Puah, were to kill all Hebrew male babies at birth. I anguished in fear for what would happen to my unborn baby. I prayed to the God of my ancestors - the God of our people Israel. When I gave birth to my son Moses, Shiphrah and Puah had the courage to spare him. Later when I hid Moses in a basket on the river. Pharaoh's daughter found him and loved him.

An unbelievable thing happened. My daughter Miriam was watching nearby and offered to find someone to care for the baby until he was grown. That was how I was free to nurture and raise my own son.

Somehow I knew that God would continue to answer my prayers and keep my son safe. The gift God gave me was *Courage to Take Risks.*

O Lord my Lord! How wonderful is your name in all the earth!
(Place gift beside the candle on the table.)

Reader 2: Hannah (1 Samuel 1)

I am Hannah. I was married to Elkanah. But I was so very unhappy and ashamed, since I had borne no children. Peninnah, my husband's other wife had many children. She enjoyed taunting me about my barrenness. Every day I prayed to the God of our people to give me a child. If God gave me a son, I promised to give him back to the Lord for all the days of his life. When my son was born, I called him Samuel. When Samuel was old enough, I took him to the temple and gave him to God as I had promised. It was hard to give up my son, but I knew he was a gift from God, and God had a plan for his life. The gift God gave me was the *Potential of the Child Within.*

O Lord, my Lord, how wonderful is your name in all the earth!
(Place gift beside the candle on the table.)

Reader 3: Deborah (Judges 4 & 5)

I am Deborah, a prophetess and the wife of Lappidoth. I was judging Israel when Israel, once again, disobeyed God. My people were sold into the hands of Jabin, King of Caanan. They cried to our God for help. One day while I was sitting under the palm tree in the hill country of Ephraim, the Israelite people came to me to solve their dilemma. I called my general, Barak, to lead the Israelite army against Jabin's army. Barak said he would go if I would go with him. So I went with the army of my people! God gave us the victory and spared my people from more years of oppression. The gift God gave me was *Wisdom to lead my people.*

O Lord, my Lord, how wonderful is your name in all the earth!
(Place the gift beside the candle on the table.)

Reader 4: The Sinful Woman (Luke 7)

I am known in the Bible as "the sinful woman". I was labelled an outcast by society. Then I met Jesus. I could hardly believe what happened. He looked at me with compassion and offered to make me a whole person. He helped turn my life around. He made me free. My heart was so full that I wanted to shout from the rooftops. When I heard He was sharing a meal at one of the Pharisees' homes, I gathered up my courage and went there with a very precious bottle of alabaster ointment. Jesus looked so kindly at me that I started to cry. I knelt and washed His feet with my tears, drying them with my hair. Then I put the sweet smelling fragrance on His tired, aching feet. Of course, insults were hurled at me; but I only remember what Jesus said to me. "Your sins are forgiven, your faith has saved you - go in peace." The gift God gave me was *Forgiveness and Acceptance.*

O Lord, my Lord, how wonderful is your name in all the earth!
(Place the gift beside the candle on the table.)

Reader 5: Martha (Luke 10)

I am Martha, sister to Mary and Lazarus. Jesus, our friend, always stayed with us and rested from his travels. Sometimes He was so tired. I tried very hard

to make Him comfortable; to prepare good food to nourish Him. I don't think He always got enough to eat on His travels. We wanted His visits with us to be restful and give Him energy to carry on. Sometimes I fussed too much. When I complained to Jesus about Mary not helping me with the chores, he told me I was too anxious. Jesus said I should take time to rest from my work, to visit and talk to Him as Mary did. What a strange experience for a Jewish woman like myself! We were expected to prepare the food and to be seen and not heard. But Jesus did not treat women according to the Jewish tradition. Jesus gave us freedom! The gift God gave me was *Freedom.*

O Lord, my Lord, how wonderful is your name in all the earth!

(Place your gift beside the candle on the table.)

Reader 6: The Phoenician Woman (Mark 7)

I am a Phoenician woman, living in the region of Tyre and Sidon. My daughter was ill. I tried all kinds of medicine, took her to many healers; but, alas, nothing helped. I heard about this man Jesus who was travelling and teaching near our part of the country. They say he healed many people as well. Could he perhaps heal my daughter? I made up my mind to go talk with this man. When I met Jesus and pleaded with him to heal my daughter, he did not take me seriously. I insisted that even though my daughter was not Jewish, still she was a human being and needed to be healed. Jesus saw my desperation and He said, "Go home, your daughter is healed." When I returned home I found her completely well. I am so glad I persisted. The gift God gave me was *Faith to be Persistent.*

Oh, Lord, my Lord, how wonderful is your name in all the earth!

(Place gift beside the candle on the table.)

Litany of Thanksgiving

L: Creator God, you formed the worlds and made everything good.

P: We praise your name, O God.

L: Longsuffering God, you never gave up on your wayward children, but sought through many lessons, to bring your people back to yourself.

P: We confess our unfaithfulness, O God.

L: Compassionate God, you never wavered in your love for your people; and you ultimately gave from the depths of your being in showing us your love in Jesus Christ.

P: We turn to you in thanksgiving, O Lord of our salvation.

L: O God, in Jesus Christ you showed us the depths of your love that includes the poor, the outcast, and the marginalized in our society. We stand in awe of your intense love for all your children on earth.

P: Forgive us, Lord, when we have failed to share the love you have given us, with those around us in our community, in our country, and in other nations.

L: We thank you, O Lord, for the stories in scripture that show the love and faithfulness of outstanding women who trusted you.

P: We thank you for the lessons we can learn from the women in the Old Testament whose trust and faith led them to greater blessings from you.

L: We thank you for the women in the New Testament whose encounters

with Christ brought radical change in their lives.
P: We thank you for the power of your love that sets us free.
L: We give you thanks, O God, for your enduring love that takes us beyond ourselves to walk the journey with all your children everywhere.
P: Keep us faithful and keep us ever willing to show mercy, and to embrace justice as we walk humbly with you. Amen.

Offering & Offering Prayer:
O God, giver of life and all that is good, we give you our offering to show our thankfulness for all you have given to us. Amen.

Hymn #663 God, whose giving knows no ending (use tune Austria on page 483) or 1972 BP # 70 Immortal, invisible, God only wise)

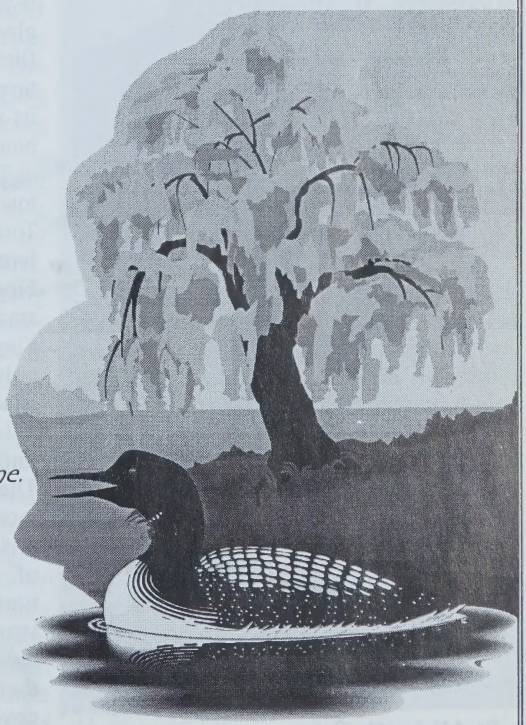
Benediction (in unison): Go with us now in our various journeys. May we, as the psalmist and the faithful women of history, respond to you - *O Lord our Lord, how wonderful is your name in all the earth.* Amen

- Bernice Shih is a member of the Editorial Working Group of Council Executive, and Coordinator of the Saskatchewan Core Committee.

The Loon

Water like glass
The gentlest breeze
Whispers through the trees
Mosquitoes everywhere
Searching for a taste
And I race for the door
Then I hear her voice
Its mournful cry beckons
In the lingering twilight
She cries
Her sleep is broken
By the boats that chop
Up the water
For one last time before night.
Oh that I could sit here forever
With silence as my solitude
With nightfall like a cloak around me.
And God so close beside me
Then morning breaks
And the waves lap at my feet
As I stand at the shore
And watch the mist roll back
And the day begin again.

Maureen Kowal



A Pilgrimage to Iona

by Jamie Ross

- St. Michael's Cross

As we ferry out of Oban Bay, the sky opens up and the rain beats down. Huge droplets explode on the ship's deck, scattering the passengers, sending them retreating for the boat's inner sanctums. I refuse to leave my chair on the exposed upper deck, for I have come a long way to enjoy the rugged, shoreline beauty of the Western Scottish Highlands. Besides, I cannot be outdone by my stubborn, 73-year-old Aunt, who is accompanying me today on a pilgrimage to the ancient Abbey on the Isle of Iona.

Sweeping out of the west coast of Scotland in a great double arc, the Inner and Outer Hebrides consist of a hundred or so craggy, worn islands clothed in soft, green felt. Their location often puts them in the path of cold, wet North Atlantic winds. Though it may be true that the rain is part of the allure of these isles, I am still glad when the clouds break and sunbeams filter through, just as we cruise up the picturesque Sound of Mull to Craignure, with its colourful houses fringing a quiet harbour.

The evening before in the coastal resort town of Oban, we booked a "Three Islands Tour." The organized day trip takes us by ferry to Craignure, west across Mull to Fionnphort by bus, on a detour aboard a small tug to the strange Isle of Staffa and Fingal's Cave, and then on a passenger-only ferry to the small 5.5 kilometre long island of Iona.

Iona has an historical and religious importance out of all proportion to its size. The island, founded in 563 by the Irish monk Colum Cille or Columba, became a missionary centre and the head of a family of monasteries in Ireland, Scotland and northern England. Celtic Christianity was strongly ascetic in character, and many monastic founders preferred island sites for their communities. What St. Columba discovered was a tiny island off the coast of

Scotland, a small piece of grass-covered rock that had seemingly crumbled loose from the west coast of the Isle of Mull. Here, he founded his monastic community, the first Christian settlement in Scotland, and a place that became a hub of spiritual power and pilgrimage for centuries.

Upon disembarking at the pier in St. Ronan's Bay, it becomes quickly apparent that we are at a place of historic reverence. The procession of modern pilgrims sets off, reciting, in hushed tones, passages from their guide books. The main street leads up from the jetty, past the post office and grocer's shop to the crumbling remains of a thirteenth century nunnery.

All that is left today are the chancel, nave and parts of the vaulted roof of the chapel. Many old tombs can still be seen, including that of the last prioress, Anna, who died in 1543. The ground is a carpet of short grass, with flowerbeds adding splashes of purple, yellow and red. The ruins are of more subdued colours ranging from pink to grey, enclosed by a matching oblong wall.

The earliest surviving standing building on Iona is St. Oran's Chapel, probably erected as a family burial chapel by Somerled, Lord of the Isles, in the 1100's. The surrounding burial ground, Reilig Odhrain, is rumoured to contain the bones of 48 Scottish kings, including Macbeth and Duncan I, together with numerous other sovereigns from Ireland, France and Norway. However, nothing very recognizable is left of the tombs today.

Beyond the north wall of Reilig Odhrain can be seen a branch of a medieval roadway, the "Street of the Dead," leading to the Abbey. Following repeated attacks by Norse invaders, little remains of Columba's early Christian monastery today. The present Abbey dates from Medieval times, founded about 1200 for Benedictine monks and dedicated to St. Columba. It stands

Visiting Iona

We took the "Three Island Tour," out of Oban at a cost of 29 pounds. This full day trip also allowed for a guided tour of Mull and a visit to Fingal's Cave on Staffa. Our bus driver/tour guide, David Greenhalgh, was both informative and entertaining, making for an enjoyable drive across the Isle of Mull, and the unusual basalt formations that make up Staffa and Fingal's Cave were awe-inspiring.

On its own, the short ferry ride from Mull to Iona costs six pounds return. There is no mandatory charge for entry to the Abbey and associated buildings, though a donation of two pounds is encouraged for the Iona Cathedral Trust. An Official Guide Book and an associated Audio Tour of Iona Abbey and Nunnery are available at the Abbey Reception Gate.

Iona has a permanent population of some 100 people, and several families retain their Gaelic language and traditions. Besides providing services for the hundreds of thousands of visitors who come each year, fishing and crofting remain the island's economy.

Jamie Ross is a freelance writer based near 100 Mile House, BC. He has had recent work published in beautiful BC Magazine, Canadian Traveller and others. He is a regular columnist for a number of BC community newspapers and has written several regional travel guides, among others. His photography frequently accompanies his work.

"Aunt" Florence Ross is a member of the Glad Tidings Editorial Working Group, on Council Executive and co-presdient of West Toronto Presbyterial. In her "spare" time, florence does volunteer work in the Glad Tidings office.

- Abbey from Reilig Odhrain, the burial place of Scottish Kings.

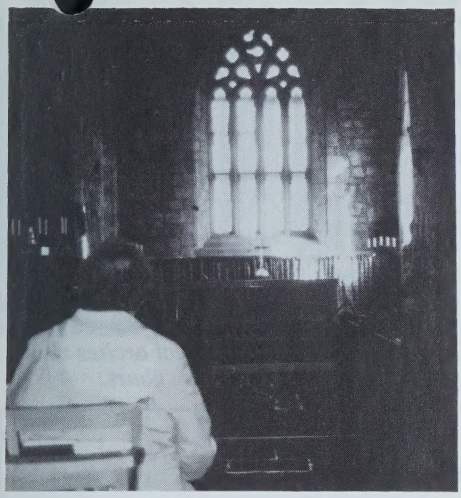
near the centre of the area occupied by the early monastery. After the Reformation, it fell into ruin and the royal gravestones were almost lost under the weeds.

It wasn't until the start of the 20th century that the church itself was restored when the Duke of Argyll made it over to the Iona Cathedral Trust. In 1938, George Macleod, a minister in Glasgow, founded the Iona Community and initiated the long process of reconstructing the monastic buildings. Today, the restored buildings of Iona, including the Abbey serve as a spiritual centre under the jurisdiction of the Church of Scotland.

In front of the west door stands a carved cross commemorating the fourth-century French bishop Saint Martin. To the north of the main entrance to the Abbey Church, tucked behind St. John's Cross is Saint Columba's shrine. Only the footings of this tiny, steep-roofed building had survived, before it was restored in 1962. The inner cell is illuminated by a single candle next to an open bible.

The Nave was the only part of the medieval church to require extensive rebuilding, in 1910. Once inside, the church reveals itself to be brighter than I had imagined, and features a north and south transept, a prayer corner, the effigy of Abbot John MacKinnon and a Choir. In lieu of a church choir, robins sing in the archways, hopping from one support to the next. While some visitors attempt quiet contemplation, prayer and recollection, others mill about with cameras flashing.

Several doors lead through the north wall. I pass through to the other side and find myself in the cloisters. Warm sunlight caresses the stone curves, as rows of perfect arches run endlessly round a grassy court. In the middle of the quadrangle stands a strange bronze by Holocaust refugee Jacob Libschitz, "The Descent of the Spirit." The sculpture has been greened by weather and time. Here, also, ancient knights carved on memorial stones lean against the walls like silent witnesses. What secrets lay behind the upper win-



- Inside the sanctuary

dows? What events are imprinted on the stone walls? What answers to life's questions?

Ignoring such meditative musings, I wander over well-worn stone slabs, through a tiny passageway, into a cramped gift shop, and am quickly transported back to the present. Amongst post cards, souvenir key chains, stickers, posters, Abbey playing cards and pencil sharpeners, there is a good selection of religious and historical books, and some well-crafted jewellery.

Around the back of the abbey is the abbey museum, once the infirmary. Behind a heavy door, is a room full of early Christian and Medieval stones, effigies and crosses of late medieval, West Highland type. At one end stood the partly reconstituted form of Saint John's Cross, possibly the first ever Celtic ringed cross. Its position in front of the abbey is now occupied by a replica.

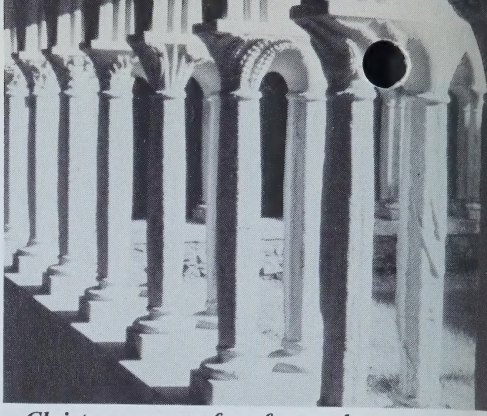
Outside, on the grounds, a group of workers from the religious community toil in the gardens and on the lawns. The rent free tenant of the Abbey buildings is the Iona Community, who occupies the property as a living Christian community and is responsible for interior maintenance of the residential quarters.

It is a beautiful and important chapter in the history of Christianity. I am moved by

- Isle of Iona - St. Ronan's Bay

the Abbey. I can feel the weight of the centuries in the air and in the very fabric of the building. It is not as spectacular in appearance as many of the great cathedrals I have visited, but it surrounds itself with an aura of truth rather then pretension. It is solemn, humble and old. The soft afternoon light gives the abbey an earthy glow, polished by centuries of weather, love and faith.

Photos: Cover and pp 14 Florence Ross; pp 12, 15, 16 Jamie Ross



- Cloisters - rows of perfect arches run endlessly around a grassy court.

My Pruning Hook

by Elizabeth Payne

I have been pondering this theme for the last week or so, but that is as far as it went. I didn't know where to start. The telephone would ring; my calico cat wanted in, and the other - my big fat Tommy - wanted out; and I really had to do a lick and a promise on some spring cleaning. But I was either resting, gargling my strep throat, listlessly trying to decide what to make for dinner - not that I was hungry, but my poor hubby had been working hard. After all, somebody has to do some work around here....

Spring had come and I had been reading and listening to the TV about the subject of pruning trees. I thought to myself, "I am like a tree, and I too need some pruning. Some branches are too long and some not long enough. I shall try to prune and trim in order to make me more balanced."

My lopsided tree! The big solid trunk is God, from which all my branches spring and receive their nourishment. Jesus said, "I am the vine, you are the branches" (John 15:1, RSV).

Let us see now: those too-long branches of impatience, despair, self pity, nagging, discouragement, complaining, criticism among other things, must be sharply trimmed to make room for the rather crowded out shorter ones. Bible study, sympathy for people that are in far worse circumstances than I am, listening for that still small voice, and prayer, most of all.

My branch of thankfulness is in good shape, for I am truly grateful for so many blessings that have been heaped on me: friends, family, the joys of the season, and peace in my heart, even though the world is in an uproar of violence and godlessness.

Now I must get busy with that pruning hook, no matter how it might hurt, and first ever that long branch of impatience - actually caused by my inability to do so many things. Come to think of it, I don't really know if God cares if there is a bit of dust under the beds, or my cupboards resemble Fibber McGee's closet!

My sturdy, dependable trunk will fortify me and give me hope and comfort one day at a time, and my tree will flourish.

Augment your Cuba Study with this Puzzle

PARTNERSHIP WITH CUBA -WONDERWORD

by Muriel Belanger, Vankleek Hill

Circle the words related to the Cuba Study.

E M B A R G O X P C N T S E L B I B
V D H B A E P I U O O B E A C H L L
O N U U I D N L E N I C C R E S I I
L A B C N E T A O Q T H A G E D O B
H S Y A A U R S N U U U S M A E S E
A O L P R T N A Y E L R T E P E C T
C S P E H E I R C S O C R P E S O A
I L I E V T R O C T V H O A U B B F
E N L E S A N A N I E E R N A I A R
N P T I T O R E N E R S D C K A L I
D S R I M I M D E F T A C E N O T C
A H O Y B N I R N S Y O L A M E T A
C N N B R G D C A S L A V E S E O H
S I E E E F F O C U S A M F K U U Y
T A V N R R C H R S H N T R R C R A
N O O U E C O M A E H I A E A E I D
G U I M B O J L G J F M C E E F S I
S T M K L A W A U N C O A D B M M L
U U H S I N A P S E C I R O B A O O
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AFRICA
BEACH
BEANS
BIBLES
BIKE
BODEGA

CAMPS
CARE
CARIBBEAN
CASTRO
CHRISTIAN
CHURCHES
COAST
COBALT
COFFEE
COME
CONQUEST
CUBA
CULTURE

EARTH
ECONOMY
EDUCATION
EMBARGO

FARM
FOCUS
FREEDOM
FRIENDS
FRUIT

GOVERNMENT

HACIENDA
HAVANA
HELP
HOLIDAY
HOME
HOPE

INDIGENOUS
ISLAND

JESUS
JOB

LOVE

MARKET
MEDICAL
MEET

PALM
PESO
PINEAPPLE

RAIN
RATIONS
REED
REFORM
REVOLUTION
RICE

SAND
SEA
SEED
SOIL
SLAVES
SPANISH
STEVENSON
SUGARCANE
SUMMER
SUN
SUNDAY SCHOOL

TINY
TOBACCO
TOURISM

WALK

CELEBRATING: Children, Teens, Young Adults

Learning/Sharing 2000-2001 Partners: Meeting Friends in Malawi

The 2000-2001 Learning/ Sharing resource, *Partners: Meeting Friends in Malawi* written by Heather Jones, edited by Anne Saunders is ready! This four-week attractive study may be used with children and youth in Canada to promote awareness of our partnership with Malawi and to urge young people to raise money for mosquito nets, a PWS&D project to reduce deaths due to malaria.

One copy has been sent out to each congregation in the August PCPak.

CUBA LEARNING/SHARING PROJECT

Update May 2000: from Marjorie Ross, International Ministries

Many groups across our church have expressed interest in this project which will help to provide Christian Education materials and Christian literature for the children and young people of our partner church, the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba.

People have asked how the funds raised will be channeled to the church in Cuba. At a meeting of the Caribbean-North American Council on Mission in the Dominican Republic (May 13-20) I spoke with the General Secretary of the Cuban church, Rev. Dr. Carlos Emilio Ham.

He explained that many of the materials that they need are available in Cuba, or could be brought into Cuba when members of the church travel to North America or Europe. The problem is that everything must be paid for in "hard currency". Many of the craft supplies, for example, might be available in the "dollar stores" in Cuba where all purchases must be made in U.S. dollars. If you do not have U.S. dollars, you cannot buy them, and they are not available in the stores that deal in pesos. Dr. Ham says this "dual currency" system, and the church's lack of hard currency, is one of their major concerns.

Dr. Ham told me that the small Protestant church in France is assisting them with funds with which they are producing a locally written curriculum. The funds from Canada will be used for supplies and for equipment to be used in their programs.

People have asked if they should use their offerings to buy materials to send to Cuba. They would much prefer to have the funds sent to them so that they can determine their use. Dr. Ham said, "Please tell people how much we appreciate receiving hard currency, because it gives us the opportunity to buy exactly what we need". (In addition, sending the supplies from Canada would mean paying postage and very likely high customs duty at the other end.)

Dr. Ham expressed the warm appreciation of his church for this assistance from Canada for their Christian Education program. This is another plank in the bridge of friendship we are building between our two churches.

Please send your offering to:

Cuba Learning/Sharing
50 Wynford Drive
Toronto, ON M3C 1J7
Attn: Gladys Stover

POEMS FOR THE YOUNG AND THE YOUNG AT HEART!

World Wise

Youth snaps in protest
And shouts at life
And the world at large
Rejects or destroys with abandon
What it can not or will not
accept.

The old
Grown a little wiser
Though they sigh and grumble
Accept what they cannot alter
And manage to live with it
That is...more or less....

Lini R. Grol

Little Boy Four

What do you do with your time,
Grandma
What do you do all day?
I sort out all my memories, lad
And take some time to pray.
Do you wish that you were young,
Grandma
Like brother Jeffery and me?
But I am young at heart, lad
Though old flesh is all you see.
Are you afraid to die, Grandma?
I sure don't want you to.
No I'm not afraid to die, lad
For I'll live again in you.

Gladys Nolan

Prayer At the End of a Vacation

God of all understanding,

May the alarm
Wake me gently
Tomorrow morning.

May the traffic
Flow smoothly.

And may I
Make the most of my newly soothed nerves.
And my freshly cleared mind
At work once again,
So that Your gracious gifts
Of inward peace and outward rejuvenation
Will not end
On this last glorious day
Of my vacation.
I ask this in the name of Christ,
Our Lord,
Amen

Roberta G. McClelland

Roberta G. McClelland is a religion writer from London, ON who has been published in Christian magazines throughout Canada and the United States.

Jonathan Sherbino: Conquering the African Veldt! or Being a Missionary in Africa

Jonathan served at Ekwendeni Hospital, Malawi from November 1999 until February 2000. He stayed at the same place as Bruce Hickling, an engineering student working on a water project with the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Livingstonia Synod. (Jonathan then traveled to India to work at Jobat Christian Hospital until mid-May. He was then assigned to Tansen Hospital in Nepal.) Jonathan describes his adventures camping with Bruce in a Zambian game park.

Call me Dr. Doolittle, Diane Fossey (maybe not) or Tarzan, but I have conquered the African veldt. I did manage not to step in anything that was steaming, squishy and smelled bad. Last week, Bruce and I spent a weekend camping in a remote corner of a Zambian game park. It was a complete "guy" experience, in that absolutely no pre-planning was undertaken. Late one evening, the idea was hatched. Waking early the next morning, we threw some food and gear into the truck, and headed for the Zambian border.

It would have been nice to have packed: my immunization record (of course a little "negotiation" at the medical control solved everything); a map (oh well, this isolated dirt road must be the right one); a fly for the tent (nah, it won't rain during the rainy season). You start to get the idea.

Open up any National Geographic magazine, randomly pick a page, point to an animal, and I saw it from a range of eight feet. We had almost the entire national park (9,000 square kilometers) to ourselves.

Travelling in an open Land Cruiser - no windscreen, roof or sides - we simply sat in the back on bench seats and tried to keep all keep all body parts within the vehicle.

The highlight of the four days came when we discovered a pride of lions - two males, four females and some cubs - starting out on the evening hunt! At one point we even found ourselves stuck in the middle of the pride. Who else thinks that being six feet from a male lion stalking his prey is a bad idea? There were moments that eerily resembled the opening sequence of Jurassic Park, where the crooked scientist drives his Jeep off the road.

From the zebras, giraffes and elephants of Zambia, we returned to the chicken, mangy dogs and goats of Ekwendeni. As newly anointed big game trackers, Bruce and I were fully prepared for the chicken we were given yesterday.

By this I mean, there was a chicken running around in our "backyard". Catching it was no easy feat. We stumbled around the house before work, trying to capture an animal that looked as if it was carrying Ebola!

The dog - sans herding gene - was not exactly helping matters. "Yeah, that's a good idea, Floyd, chase the chicken into that eight-foot elephant grass. Then we'll really have it cornered." I will save you the details of who won that battle of wits.

By now, I have gotten over any culinary

squeamishness. (If you can sort the maggots out of your rice, ya ain't squeamish.) For example, I went out with the mobile clinic today. Because we are in such a remote area we bring our own lunch - rice and "meat". As we were preparing to leave, I had one of those extremely dumb moments: "I wonder where we get the "meat" from?

I discovered that the butcher is the dude who owns the only axe in Ekwendeni (apparently the sole requirement for the job.) Hanging outdoors, from a large metal hook fastened to a wooden X-beam, was a nondescript carcass. The blood was pooling at my feet. We opted for the upper-class cut of "meat". Basically we chose the butt over the intestines. So, the butcher hauled out his axe and started a-swingin'. The food was fine once you learned to pick out the bone chips!

Working with the mobile clinics has been one of my enjoyable experiences. Once a week I head out with a medical assistant and a team of nurses, via 4x4 ambulance, to a remote thatch-hut village. We arrive to find a congregation of two to three hundred women with their children. As the clinic opens these women break into a gorgeous African chorus, complete with clapping and dancing. Once the singing and opening education (covering such areas as malaria and nutrition) is complete, I settle underneath a large tree and start screening children five years of age or younger.

In the course of two hours, I may see 60 children, a very frenetic pace. With minimal drugs available, and no lab support, the brand of medicine practised is quite basic. Our focus is primarily on malnutrition, vaccinations, malaria, intestinal parasites, and basic infections.

One of the hardest things is seeing a cluster of several children standing alone in the long line. Invariably, such children are AIDS orphans. It is estimated that in sub-Saharan Africa there are 10 million AIDS orphans - defined as a child without his/her mother (fathers often play a minimal child rearing role) or both parents.

In Malawi alone, there are 270,000 orphans as a result of this disease.

"I"-Witness

Mid December last year, I awoke with the sniffles. By nighttime I was having trouble breathing. I didn't think much of it. I have had bronchial asthma most of my life. It is triggered when I get a chest cold. By morning, however, I was really in trouble. My girl friend called an ambulance and I spent seven days in the hospital, six of those on oxygen.

My doctor said that flu had triggered my bronchial asthma and virtually shut down my respiratory system, resulting in substantial lung damage. Because I had only 35-50% lung capacity left, I would be oxygen dependent for the rest of my life. I was scheduled to have breathing tests in February.

While I was in hospital my pastor and friends from my congregation visited me. I knew that a lot of people were praying for me.

When I got home the oxygen was set up. With the least exertion I was out of breath.

When the breathing tests were done the technician said that the respirologist would likely order more tests and might want to see me sooner.

A few days later my pastor called and invited me to our weekly prayer meeting. That wonderful group of Christians laid hands on me and prayed for me. The next morning my breathing started to improve. Each day it got a little better.

When I finally saw the respirologist, she said I didn't seem to have much, if any, lung damage. My bronchial tubes were inflamed but if I stayed on my medication for about six months, I would probably be just fine. It was as if everything that been said to me, never was. I had the oxygen removed from my home and I haven't taken any medication since that wonderful prayer meeting.

Thank you Father for letting me serve you a little while longer.

Marlene Lane,
Penticton, BC

Ekwendeni has attempted to respond to this crisis through its extensive HIV program: education, counseling, testing and community support. Unlike other countries which direct AIDS orphans to orphanages, our region has adopted a system whereby the local village cares for these children.

The magnitude of the impact of HIV on Africa (or Asia for that matter) is enormous. I would estimate that 60% of males admitted to Ekwendeni have contracted the disease. When you consider the health costs, the loss of an entire labour-force generation, the impact on families, etc., you despair at where to even begin attacking the problem. Several days ago I diagnosed an eight-year-old boy with advanced HIV disease. With absolutely no access to costly Western medications, there was nothing we could do. My only response was to go home and cry.

I have benefited from the counsel of both ex-patriots and nationals who have been combating these issues for many years. Many of them share a similar response. The enormity of the issues easily overwhelms the individual, leading to paralysis. However, God has called each person to a particular task, often a small task in the grand scheme of things. Although one person's effort may only make a subtle ripple in the big picture, it has made all the difference in the life of that particular individual.

I had the most amazing experience a month ago. Bruce and I were in Malawi in 1989 with Teen Missions. During this time we built a school. One Thursday Bruce, on his way to the bus station in Blantyre, bumped into Don, our leader from ten years ago! Surprised, Don told Bruce where he was staying.

I convinced Bruce that we should hunt down our former stomping grounds. Saturday morning we took off, and eventually straggled into a campsite on the lake. The next day we found the town Don mentioned, but no Don.

Finding the police station (not necessarily a wise move in a remote area such as this) they directed us to the exact place we wanted. We found Don, who was again speechless. He gave us a tour of the grounds where has been working, still for Teen Missions, for the last five years. Don has a pet baboon. The baboon took a big shine to me which resulted in Don keeling over in fits of laughter. The baboon picked all the bugs our of my leg hair and ate them - enjoying quite a feast!

Don remembered the church that commissioned us to build the school. We found the church in another town. One of the Malawians with us found a woman near the church who knew the minister. We eventually found the minister's house and he knew, right away, the village we were talking about.

We drove down an abandoned dirt road, and there, exactly as I remembered it, was our mud-brick school. A rush of emotions and memories spilled forth. The school is still in use, although the area where we camped has undergone a vast change. Where there was once eight-ten foot elephant grass, there is now a field of cassava. The village around the well has also changed. One classroom of the two, built over a termite mound, has been completely overrun.

What was so fantastic about this experience was the recollection of where I have come in ten years. A decade ago, I was sitting around an evening fire, imagining where or who I would become. Now I know. Ten years ago, I could not have imagined I would be back at this spot. I had no intentions of being a doctor, and could not have anticipated all the experiences God has called me to. So, on to more experiences!

Joyce Aylward
Hamilton ON

Eileen Campbell
Dunvegan ON

Jean Campbell
Weston ON

Fleur Eenkhoorn
Sarnia ON

Thelma Grierson
Durham ON

Rev. Dawn Griffiths
Lindsay ON

Anne Yee Hibbs
Dundas ON

June Maxwade
Toronto ON

Gloria McAvoy
Hamilton ON

Cecilia Morris
Cobourg ON

Kathleen Phillips
Dunvegan ON

Marjorie Race
Hamilton ON

Pauline Simmons
Exeter ON

Irene Stewart
Moorewood ON

Astrid Wahl
Huntsville ON

Harry Wahl
Huntsville ON

Louise Wannamaker
Tweed ON

Rita Ewen
Kirkfield ON

Jean Harding
Ottawa ON

Sylvia McTavish
Kelowna BC

Brett McLean
Thornhill ON

Myrtle Musgrave
Bolsover ON

Cindy Ramgattan
Thornhill ON

Vernon Robertson
Kelowna BC

Margaret Slaughter
Arnprior ON

program...program...program...program...program...program.....

Margaret Robertson
Program Secretary

Displays

What Makes a Good Display?

Effective displays are well planned, well organized and eye-catching. Every good display has a purpose and everything in it expresses this central purpose.

Simplicity: Less is more. Use only the essentials to catch the viewer's attention. A good display stimulates intellectual activity, gives the viewer the main idea and lets them fill in the details. The impact and power of a display comes from the quick flash of communication.

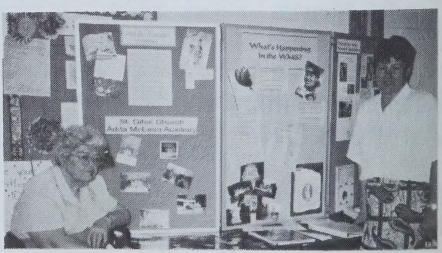
Contrast: Communication is aided if the viewer gets the main idea at one glance - but is so attracted they want a second look. This effect comes best from vivid contrast - varied colours (two or three are best), texture, shape.

Lighting (when applicable): A few simple spotlights, well placed, can make a world of difference in a display. Good use of light increases the power to attract attention and makes it easier to examine the items on display.

Lettering: Select colour and style that interpret the feeling of your idea. Letters are worthless if they are unreadable. Exaggerated lettering used with restraint and imagination can give zest to a display. Check to see that your letters are correctly placed. Be sure spelling is correct. Mounting the lettering on coloured paper will add interest. Felt pens add colour and produce a feeling of texture. Print letters from the computer (many styles available). Letters of cork, wood, felt, Styrofoam or foam core board can dramatize your display and create special moods or effects.

What is the Process?

1. Decide on the purpose of the display.
2. What will be the theme?
3. Which style best fits the purpose and/or theme?
4. What materials are available?
5. Who is available and able to do the planning and preparing?



What style will you use?

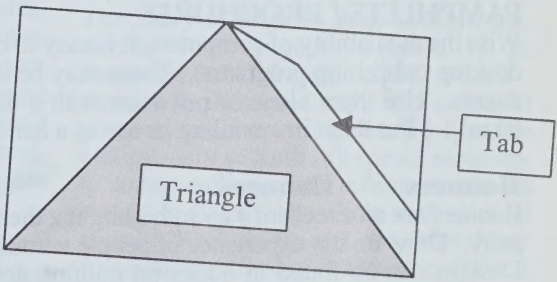
Display boards are available at many office or educational supply places. It is also possible to make a board from a large cardboard box. This style lends itself to table displays. Thus you will want to consider what will go on the table as well as on the board. (A Display Packet is available FREE from The Book Room - includes some lettering and promotional pieces for WMS).

New Idea! New Idea! New Idea!

Try making a pyramid. Cut three or four triangles (two sides equal, with a tab on one side of each). One sheet of bristol board works for each triangle.

A four-sided pyramid will fold flat for storage-in half or quarter. It is amazingly strong when opened out. This form is most suited to an area where it is seen from all sides - e.g. church hall, meeting room, foyer.

Experiment with the design. Working with a triangle is different than a square or rectangle.



Bulletin Board

First cover the board with a material that is part of the display. For example, when advertising a picnic, you could put a picnic cloth and other picnic materials on the display. Use only the most important information and explain (in smaller print) where further details can be obtained.

Glad Tidings Display

Start with a couple of copies of Glad Tidings magazines. What comes to mind? A fan of colourful covers? Leaf through the magazines. How about putting up a map highighting places the Presbyterian Church has personnel and using excerpts from their letters to make them come alive. Put the letters GLAD TIDINGS in a vertical line. Write something beside each letter, then illustrate it from a magazine i.e. ***G: good news.***

Poster

Large colour posters are available from The Book Room (11' x 17"), 7 for $6. These are suitable for bulletin boards. They can be laminated for multiple uses. They tell the story of Presbyterians Sharing.... in Canada and beyond.

In this year to focus on Children, Teens and Young Adults, ask some of these folk to design a poster based on mission stories (i.e. in Church School, after a children's story in church, Learning/Sharing study...)

Map

There are several ways to use maps. There are two current maps in *Stories of Mission* - Canada Ministries and International Ministries. These are 8 ½" x 11" but can be enlarged to the size you need. They can also be laminated up to 11" x 17" at most office supply places.

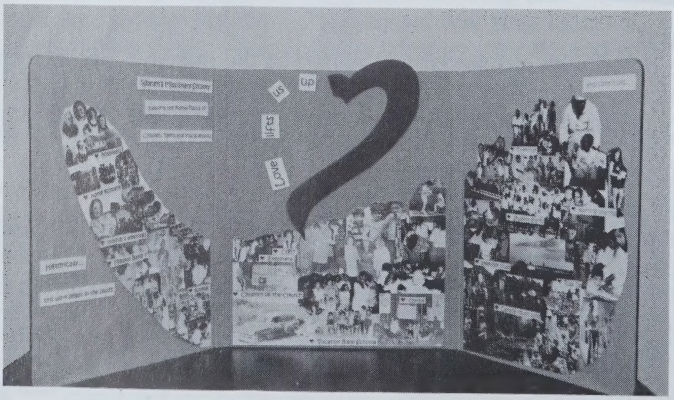
Match pictures or articles with the place of mission.
Focus on all the missions. Or focus on only a few - depending on your purpose and study.
Encourage a child to colour the map(s) for you, involving them in the learning.

PAMPHLETS / BROCHURES

With the availability of computers, it is easy to do your own pamphlets (especially on desktop publishing programs). These may be used to promote mission, programs or events. Use them alone or put them with a display (poster, bulletin board, display board...) Put them in a mailing or use as a handout.

Banners Banners

Banners are an excellent way to highlight a theme, focus on mission or tell a Biblical story. Draw on the experience of people who sew, design, quilt....
Designs can be found in books on quilting and banners (and sometimes colouring books). See also Glad Tidings Nov/Dec 1998 "Theology and Quilting: Quilts That Tell a Story".



remembered how much strength there is, in a smile.

Breaking & Mending: Divorce and God's Grace by Mary Lou Redding. Upper Room Books. G7527 (To be priced) As one who has been broken and is still mending, I salute Mary Lou Redding who speaks frankly about her divorce - before, during and after. It takes courage to examine what happened when a marriage, especially between Christians, breaks down. One of the most difficult tasks I faced when my marriage was ending was how it would affect me as a Christian and my relationship with the church.

Mary Lou Redding and I have been friends for 20 years, beginning with our membership in the Associated Church Press. She is Managing Editor of The Upper Room. As I read, I heard her voice, blunt and to the point, yet always compassionate and tender. We resonate because we grew up in the same era, with the same dreams and idealism: marriage is ordained by God and marriage is forever. When reality and idealism separate, the way becomes troubled and troubling.

Honesty is Mary Lou's saving grace - being able to examine her own life and that of her husband and family through the Christian lens. Christians are not exempt from problems and pain. Being able to work through pain to an honest realization is central to her message.

Breaking & Mending offers hope in the untenable situations that we, as human persons, find ourselves. In confronting and examining our lives through our Christian beliefs, we find ourselves able to move in the direction of wholeness.

Mary Lou reflects on her personal journey through Biblical stories of real people with real problems who struggle to be open and honest. She challenges individuals and congregations to be available to those in their midst who feel estranged because of their situations.

From *Broken Dreams to New Directions for the Future*, Mary Lou leads us to know that God is with us on our journey. Our gifts as people of God can enable us to minister to others with similar needs. Mary Lou started a singles group and still considers this a prime ministry of hers.

Whether you are trying to raise children alone, looking for meaning as a single person, or in a position of helping others, you will find something practical and supportive here. I commend this book to all who seek to live in an open and honest relationship with themselves, others and God.

L. June Stevenson

The Story of Ruth by Joan D. Chittister. Art by John August Swanson. W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. G7452 $42.50 Beautifully illustrated with bold, colourful pictures, an old story is given new life. The biblical story of Ruth still speaks eloquently today, calling us to reflect on what it means to be a truly whole and spiritual woman. Reading it, as I did, after Mary Lou Redding's *Broken & Mending*, above, I was doubly encouraged in my personal search for a full spiritual life.

Chittister and Swanson explore a series of twelve defining moments in every woman's life - moments of loss, change, transformation, aging, independence, and so on. Each chapter and each piece of artwork together illuminate the faithful life of Ruth in relation to these formative moments and lend insights into what it means to be a woman of God today.

A lovely combination of art and text, *The Story of Ruth* provides valuable help for women seeking to live wholly in a world still struggling with issues of faith and gender.

L. June Stevenson

"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." ***2 Corinthians 9:7***

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A Legacy For Your Church, An Income For Life.

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Glad Tidings 3/4-1998

MISSION IN ACTION

Thanks again to all who have written such interesting letters. Apologies once more for having to condense your messages. I hope I have captured the essence. Editor

Marlene Buwalda
Taiwan

At the end of her first term Marlene says: I have been through earthquakes, and rebuilding, extreme humidity, and very damp cold. I have missed my family and friends and made new ones here.

I have tried to speak Chinese and am still very frightened when someone actually listens to me. I have now mastered eating with chopsticks, and walking on uneven sidewalks.

I still feel like a giant in a small world, having to buy extra-large pants that are still too tight, and constantly watching for signs that I might walk into with my head; eating food that I don't recognize and meat with more bones than I remember chickens having, snack food that students continue to tell me is delicious but is very different from my own.

I saw cars that don't slow for pedestrians, and doctors that can cure you in a day. I've learned that the music I hear is not the ice-cream truck but for the garbage, and that if I stand in line I will never be served. All these things were very different for me and I continue to learn the routine.

Learning a new culture is very exciting and very challenging - and also irreplaceable: I would not give it up for anything. Especially, I want to express, throughout my year here that meeting people from the school, other churches and areas, was the greatest experience for me. The people I met really made a difference to me. Everyone made an extra effort to make me feel welcomed, and it worked.

The kindness and generosity I felt from everyone overwhelmed me and I can't wait to come back again next year. God bless,

Marlene

Adele Halliday
Komathai, Kenya

May 2000 - I spent both Easter and Earth Day in the Kakamega National Forest Reserve. This forest in northwestern Kenya near Lake Victoria is the meagre remains of a once vast forest system that used to stretch from Kenya clear across the Democratic Republic of Congo and all the way to the Atlantic Ocean. Now, however, it is one of the only few remaining equatorial rainforests left in the world. It is slowly shrinking -- more people need more resources and with increasing pressures on the land, many people fear that it might disappear completely within the span of my lifetime.

One of my passions and sources of great enjoyment is the preservation of natural habitats, time spent in old growth forests, the outdoors.

Among the many things that I have learned in Kenya, is the ability of one person to effect change (albeit positive or negative). I believe in the power of the individual. I believe in the power of God - and in the power of God working through the

individual. But somehow, perhaps, the individual does not effect as much change as is possible in society, and I have been at a loss as to why. One day, Alicia, one of the other volunteers, wisely said: "Perhaps it is the society whose heart is hardened and does not hear the message of the individual anymore". Perhaps.

But...what if we all really committed ourselves to seeking some form of justice in our communities? What if we truly advocated, came together and worked as a community of Christian believers? Surely we could effect some sort of change...if every single person who is reading this message (whether directly from me or not) committed themselves to some sort of social action -- can you imagine the impact it would have? We could really make a difference. A big difference.

One of the greatest tragedies of our society is apathy. I am appalled by people who sit around, and complain about how many things are wrong with the world. How silly that seems, when instead of sitting, instead of talking hot air, we could be acting...we could be praying, reading, educating, lobbying, advocating, joining organizations, working for social action, and more, but at least, we would be doing something - for a change.

Humbly yours,
Adele

Read further for more from Adele...

June 2000 - Sometimes I look around Komothai - at the coffee trees rustling in the wind with their ripe red berries, into the faces of broadly grinning children who greet me with joy, at the friends who have become my family and community this past year, at the land and its ever red-marking soil - and I wonder how I will ever leave this place.

I booked my plane ticket home the other day, and while my arrival in the greater Toronto area is still several months away, now everything that I do has a slight hint of finality about it

My time in Kenya is numbered. One year only. "Mwaka umwe".

When I was coming to Kenya, I was also leaving for a country with a clear sense of call, with the servant's attitude and heart. Returning home, however, I do not have such a clear sense of call of where to go next, and I wonder what my life will hold in the months after I come back. I continue to pray for discernment and continue to live in the knowledge that God has always led me towards the places that I needed to be.

You are a continued blessing and a joy to me. Thank you for everything.

As always with love,
Adele

Denise van Wissen
Nicaragua, Central America

January, 2000 - Warm greetings from Nicaragua. Christmas was happy here in Ocotal, my hometown. The celebrations were more joyful than last year's, so soon after the tragedy of Hurricane Mitch. Recuperation and rehabilitation efforts still continue, however. Here at SOYNICA (the organization with which I work), we've launched full-speed ahead into the new millennium. We're presently finishing the last workshop of our Healthy Communities program, a session that focuses on our rights as consumers, and our responsibility to make wise, healthy choices. We're also looking at Globalization, how it affects even the poor in remote areas, and how to deal with local and national issues.

As a team, we're evaluating the first six months of our major project, Food Security, and are planning this year's

OVERSEAS STAFF BIRTHDAYS

SEPTEMBER

7 - David Villalonga, Nicaragua
14 - Michael Lessard-Clouston, Japan
16 - Arlene Onuoha, Nigeria
16 - Denise van Wissen, Guatemala
22 - Jim Patterson, El Salvador
24 - Christina Schwarz, Nepal
27 - Clara Henderson, Malawi

OCTOBER

5 - Kennis Kim, Guatemala
9 - Mark Gordon, Mozambique
20 - Lezlie Cowley Allison, Cameroon
23 - Glenn Inglis, Malawi
27 - David Josiah Allison, Cameroon

program. Workshops in 48 communities have included agricultural topics, like how to make compost and use it for planting vegetables and fruits, and nutritional topics, such as healthy eating for different age groups, especially for weaning babies and pregnant women, breastfeeding, and malnutrition.

Participant families have successfully planted and harvested various tropical fruits for drinks, pineapple, cucumber, radishes, yucca (cassava). As is to be expected, the agricultural workshops are more popular with the men, and those of nutrition with women, but we're trying to involve the whole family in every aspect of their household food security. The exceptions to this generalization tend to be women who maintain fruit trees and home gardens, rather than men who venture into the kitchen!

Here at home, my lemon tree has just about given its last for this season (by April or so I expect fruit again), but the mango and avocado trees have bloomed, and the new little fruits are showing. My dog, Kampura, has fully recovered from her pregnancy of 10 pups, and seems to have returned to puppyhood once again herself.

It's been a joy to receive so many Christmas cards (they're still coming!!). I save my favourites from year to year, and the neighbourhood children enjoy the snowy scenes. Thank you for remembering us, in all of our respective countries.

In peace and solidarity,
Denise

Brian Johnston
Romania, Transylvania

My work has continued to be stimulating and fulfilling and I have much appreciated the increased involvement of the Presbyterian Church in Canada with my ongoing mission work in Romania. This year I was put on a regular missionary stipend which has given me a very positive boost and has allowed me to extend various components of my work here.

My choir had many active excursions and, besides many church appearances in various locations throughout Romania, also sang a very successful concert in the Satu Mare Philharmonic Hall. The English level of the students has continued to advance and we are constantly seeking more advanced materials and activities to further motivate them.

I continue to work closely with Celia Kenny from the Church of Scotland. She works mainly with the advanced students and can provide opportunities for the students to expand their horizons in theological thinking.

In January Rick Fee, the director of PWS&D was able to manage a short excur-

sion to Romania and to meet with some of my students. Their enthusiasm impressed him.

Last May I attended the General Assembly in Waterloo and was able to provide information to many of the participants concerning my work in Romania. It was great for me to meet many other missionaries as well as a notable number of Presbyterians throughout Canada interested in mission work.

In November I was able to purchase a Skoda, which is a Czech car having a Volkswagen motor [through a donation from the Waterloo-Wellington Presbytery]. I have already used the vehicle and have adapted to Romanian traffic and a variety of road conditions. The paper work is astronomical but the bureaucratic complications have been much alleviated by my students. A special thanks for all Canadians who have contributed to this fund. I can assure you that it will allow considerably more opportunities in furthering mission activities throughout Transylvania.

The summer was particularly rewarding for me in that three very competent young women came to Eastern Europe as part of the Youth and Mission program. They participated in camps organized in Hungary, Romania, and in Croatia. Due to the notable success of this program the project will be continued in 2000. The girls involved raised monies through their individual congregations to assist them with their work. I must thank all members of the Presbyterian Church in Canada who contine to support my work here.

The participants will have four days in Romania, with opportunities to interact with my students. I can't praise them enough. They are the main reason why I have been motivated to stay here for a longer time. They assist me so much with my work and are really making a difference both in the institute and in the various areas in which they serve throughout Transylvania.

I feel very much that we are true brothers and sisters in Christ. I am honoured to be able to work with such a dedicated and talented group of young people. Sometimes I am flabbergasted at the difficulties which they must endure in their continued studies and work activities. Their ongoing energy is truly amazing and in finishing I would like to quote Rick Fee who wrote on his return from Eastern Europe: "We have so much to learn from this part of the world."

Sincerely,

Brian Johnston

From: Marjorie Ross
To: June Stevenson
Date: 6/19/00 10:02AM
Subject: Eastern Europe trip

When the *FLAMES* tour visited Cluj in Romania they were welcomed with a concert by the male choir directed by Brian Johnston.

Annemarie Klassen wrote: A wonderful concert had been arranged by Brian the first night of our arrival in Cluj. We were welcomed very graciously (even with an encore of 'O Canada' at the end of the concert). One student welcomed us officially at the beginning of the concert. I asked him for a copy of his speech. He has sent this in the following attachment:

Dear Canadian guests, Let me welcome you in the name of our Institute and choir. It is an honorable thing and a great pleasure to have you here, among us. You probably can't imagine for how long we've been preparing for this. We've been looking forward to meeting you and having you here. On this occasion we would like to thank you for all your support and missionary work that is being done here.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

largely supported the choir and our Institute through your missionary crew member, Brian Johnston. We all know and believe that your support and help is a blessing of God and we also feel that this support is not only financial but also spiritual.

In a world, in which being a Christian is not always a virtue, it is an unutterable feeling that we can be here in Christ. Your being here demonstrates that Christian love knows no limits and has no boundaries. We all hope that The Presbyterian Church in Canada and the Transylvanian Reformed Church will have a closer connection in the future and will collaborate with Christian love's harmony in their hearts.

All this being said I wish you all the best and may God bless your life, your family and work, because praising the Lord's name through our whole life should be our aim.

Tordai Arpad

Clara Henderson
Blantyre, Malawi

Excerpts from 1999 Report

In December I began compiling an album of all the photographs of the Mvano that I have taken over the years. My goal is to complete this project early next year and present the album to the Women's Desk together with a video compilation of Mvano (Women's Guild) music and highlights from last year's golden jubilee celebration.

My major frustration this year has been the delay in transcribing the music for the Mvano songbook...I have been too busy to work on it. Because this project is so immense it will be ongoing for quite a long time. However, I will endeavor to put together a sampler of songs before I leave next year.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

Kenya
1. that Adele Halliday will have continued discernment for God's will and plans for the future.
2. for peaceful endings to the ethnic clashes and conflicts in the country.
3. for vision for the teachers at school who are planning for the future

Malawi
1. that Ekwendeni Hospital may continue to develop a long-range vision.
2. that God may call a new generation of leaders to fill the gaps of those who are leaving.
3. for the health and spiritual growth of Jonathan Sherbino
4. for the leaders of the CCAP, that they might continue to model integrity, spiritual maturity and servanthood
5. for continuing strength and wisdom for Clara Henderson as she brings music alive in Malawi.

Romania
1. for continuing development between the PCC and the church in Transylvania.

Central America
1. for Ken and Kennis Kim at the birth of Noah Matthew on July 7. Pray that the adoption process goes smoothly.
2. for Brenda and Jim Patterson with their busy schedule among the people of El Salvador.
3. for their family on the loss of Jim's father

Taiwan
1. for strength and discernment in meeting the challenges of daily life in Taiwan.

An exciting development this year was the decision of synod to begin the process of ordaining women to the ministry of word and sacrament. Women in leadership and supporting male authorities have been working hard towards achieving this goal for a number of years with conscientisation programs and leadership training. We look forward to the ordination of the first candidates sometime next year.

"Both the CCAP and the Malawi government have had an unsettling year in terms of leadership stability, economic fragility and insecurity. However, with the May re-election of Malawi's incumbent president and the appointment of a new CCAP general secretary in November it is our prayer that in the coming months both the church and the government will begin to stabilize and work towards implementing practical programs that will build up the church and nation.

In closing I would like to express once again my appreciation to all of you in the AMS, WMS, and various congregations of the PCC for the opportunity your support has given me to serve our churches here in Malawi and in Canada through the ministry of music and liturgy. I am honoured to be one of the privileged of this world that not only works in a Christian context but who is involved in work that continues to be engaging, fascinating, and inspiring.

Thank you for your continued prayer that in the coming months both the church and the government will begin to stabilize and work towards implementing practical programs that will build up the church.

Brenda & Jim Patterson
El Salvador, Central America

March 2000 - Jim's area of work is the western third of the Baptist Federation of El Salvador. Within that area are the following churches and missions which have received pastoral attention:

Metapan, Iglesia Bautista Miguel Angel Portillo, named for a Baptist pastor who was murdered by the military near Santa Ana during the recent war. [This congregation came about partly as a result of the conflict between the Baptist Association (ABES) and the folk who would later become FEBES (the Baptist Federation of El Salvador). The original congregation was split]. This left Pastor Ramon and a group of about a dozen committed Christian activists to try to initiate a truly Christocentric community work. The group decided that there are too many worship services in Metapan, and far too many "Christians". Therefore, the group meets weekly for Bible study and coordination.

As of this month they have secured the use of a rented room for their meetings. They are involved with the local prison, school aged children from the ghetto, agricultural and fishing cooperatives.

My role with Metapan has been to accompany and encourage the work, to help the pastor develop project funding requests, and to create links with other communities and resources (such as a Santa Ana lawyer who is willing to do some pro bono work in the prison.) I have also encouraged them to meet monthly for a service of Study and Sacrament.

Santa Ana, Iglesia Bautista Shekina: a mostly middle class congregation of about 70 men, women and children. It too came into being during the struggle with ABES. The church meets in a rented house, and has been preoccupied with securing funding for a "real church". The main community outreach has been evangelistic campaigns to try to attract more members.

Shekina has a lively worship and study life. The folk are willing workers, and

although the preponderance of the members are approaching old age, there is a solid group of young folk ranging from 30 down to new born.

When we are not attending other churches, Brenda and I worship with them.

Santa Ana, Seminario Bautista Latinoamericana (SEBLA): founded in 1994 following the disruption with ABES. The opportunity of a new beginning led SEBLA to reexamine the role of the seminary in the life of the church at large in light of the needs of the congregations and missions. The result has been startling. The focus of the work has become lay training and capacitation, no less than preparing prospective ministers.

The SEBLA personnel have been a very useful source of knowledge and wisdom. In return, I have been able to provide them with a measure of computer knowledge, and I teach an introductory Greek course for them.

El Refugio, Iglesia Bautista Nazarea: Pastors Elmer Trujillo and Elida Zelaya came to El Refugio about 6 years ago. The congregation had been well and truly contaminated with the prevailing Pentecostalism that has swept through El Salvador in the past twenty or so years. The ground level theology had become very individualistic. There was no thought of any community action or service. With the arrival of the pastoral team, with much patience and perseverance, things have begun to change. The cost has been high.

El Refugio was a very small, rural village. The end of the war brought an influx of resettled ex-soldiers and guerrileros. The government promise to provide these families with house and land was less than fulfilled. The result is that many of the families live in very sub-standard housing, with no electricity and, for some, no running water. Land parcels never were given out. Those that can find work do so mostly as agricultural seasonal workers, paid less than the minimum wage.

- Brenda, left with FEBES friends.

With the small remaining congregation of about 35, the pastoral team began to initiate work to benefit the community. Their efforts include: a primary school as an alternative to the overcrowded, poorly run and expensive (for the poor) government school; workshops in sewing and tailoring for young women to enable them to find work in the growing number of maquilas in El Salvador; a nursery school for toddlers so that the single moms who go off to work won't have to lock their toddlers in the house, securing them by ropes or chains for the day to keep them safe. The mothers have no choice. Many of the fathers have abandoned the families.

My work with El Refugio has consisted in helping the pastors with project submissions. I also worked with Pastora Elida to help her prepare for ordination this Spring. Elida will be the first woman ordained in FEBES. And I have provided pastoral support for the two pastors and some of the deacons.

Atikizaya, Iglesia Bautista Getsemani Getsemani, like El Refugio, suffered internal divisions both over the ABES/FEBES disruption, and over the prevailing

Pentecostalism. Time came when they could no longer afford a pastor. The group dwindled to a handful. Pastor Napoleon Perez accepted the invitation to lead them on a very part time basis. He works full time as a caretaker in Santa Ana. Three or four days a week he catches the bus out to Atikizaya to do pastoral visiting, preach, and work with the deacons. The results of his patient labour are beginning to show. Attendance is up. Pentecostalism is gradually abating.

Pastor Napoleon invited me to lead a seven-week study with the congregation on how to read and understand the Old Testament in its context. In the context of worship and in place of a sermon, the whole congregation participated in the study.

FEBES national work.

Along with the Rev. Magda Aguirre (the Eastern area Missioner) I attend the monthly meetings of the FEBES Junta Directiva, and the weekly meetings of the Pastoral Accompaniment Project, usually in San Salvador, but sometimes in the east or the west.

For the annual FEBES Assembly I was part of a team to write and organize the liturgies, as well as being the official "Sheepdog" to help keep the people on time (no small task in the Salvadoran culture).

PCC Work

As part of the Central America team, my particular labour of love is to prepare and maintain the area home pages. Last, but not least, I help organize visits from Canada to El Salvador, and to encourage mission participation among Canadian PCC churches. My thanks to the International Ministries staff for making this appointment possible, and for providing for our needs here.

NEWS

Director Appointed at St. Andrew's Hall

Erin Crisfield has been appointed as the Director of the St. Andrew's Hall Elders' Institute, Vancouver, BC.

Erin has served as Area Educational Consultant for the Synod of Southwestern Ontario for the past four years. She is a graduate of the University of Alberta and has an Master of Pastoral Studies degree from Vancouver School of Theology in educational ministries. She has done a lot of elder education in the context of her current position and brings a real passion for improving the competence and performance of our denomination through this body of dedicated and capable leaders.

She convenes the planning committee for the Eldership Conference 2000 for the Synod of Southwestern Ontario to be held in London this November. She sits on the Lay Ministry Advisory Committee and the Education for Faith Advisory Committee of the Life and Mission Agency, and on the Program Working Group of the Women's Missionary Society. She is a member of the North American organization for professional Christian educators.

Erin will begin her work in Vancouver in early September. The initial appointment is for a three-year period, during which Erin will coordinate the development of services and courses in close cooperation with others working in the field, work with an Advisory Council made up of ruling elders from across the country to fine tune the structure of the Institute, develop marketing plans for the Institute's courses and other resources, and put the Institute on a solid financial footing for the future.

Western Women's Conference Planned

Plans for a Western Women's Conference - June 22-24, 2001 in Saskatoon are well underway. The theme is "New Beginnings in Christ".

Delegates will meet at Queen's House Retreat Center in Saskatoon, a beautiful

Following dinner Tuesday evening, everyone "fed the flame" through the ministry of music by St. James Children's Choir and the Kent County Choir. The evening was closed with the sacrament of Holy Communion, administered by Rev. Evelyn Carpenter of the host church.

Wednesday morning began with members of Sarnia Presbyterial "fanning the flames" with worship and In Memoriam", followed by bible study on Jubilee, conducted by resource staff Erin Crisfield.

Mary Moorhead, President of Council Executive, guest speaker spoke of the accomplishments of the Society.

Rev. Rosemary Doran installed the executive.

Our Vision for God's Children was the theme for the 86th Annual Meeting of the Synodical of **British Columbia** held at Richmond Presbyterian Church on March 24th and 25th. Opening worship was led by Rev. Tony Plomp assisted by associate minister Jim Walton.

Rev. Betty McLagan, Synodical President, welcomed everyone and constituted the meeting with prayer. Business and reports were followed with a talk and slide presentation by Rev. Elizabeth Forrester on her visit to Malawi in 1999.

Three workshops were offered by Rev. Sylvia Cleland, Rev. Wayne Stretch and by Janet Tremblay. Workshop on Saturday morning was led by Laurie Jackson who read from Luke 24: 2-35, "The Walk to Emmaus".

"Highlights of her trip to Bangkok" was shared by Joanne Instance who also conducted the installation of officers. The new President is Betty Siverns.

The Service of Remembrance was presented by Amy Chwojka.

PRESBYTERIAL

Sarnia Presbyterial celebrated the year 2000 with a bus tour to Toronto and Crieff, Ontario to visit historic sites and points of interest.

The first stop on the trip was the provincial parliament buildings at Queen's Park, Toronto. Here, we learned some of Ontario's history and about the parliamentary system of government.

Next was Evangel Hall, an inner city mission, founded in 1913.

Following a scenic drive through Burlington, Lowville and Campbellville, we toured the facilities at Crieff Hills Retreat and Conference Centre. A delicious dinner was enjoyed in Maclean Hall, an original one-room schoolhouse built in 1874, now serving as a dining room.

Dorothy Neal, Anna Jean McCoskery, Martha and Bonnie Arbour were thanked for arranging such an enjoyable tour.

Paris Presbyterial held the Annual Meeting on April 8 at Paris Church. Theme for the day was *Celebrate 2000: Grace and Truth came through Jesus Christ* (John 1:17). Welcoming members were Janet Corrigan, President of the hosting group, the Helen Young Auxiliary, and Gloria Wasacase, Presbyterial President. Rev. Stanley Cox, minister of the host church, brought greetings.

Following opening devotions by Knox, Woodstock, area staff Erin Crisfield conducted a Memorial Service.

Lunch was followed by a singalong led by Joyce Bawcutt, accompanied by Susie Strickler on piano. The Synodical theme song "A Bush Bursts into Flame" was introduced.

The "Hands in Praise" Team, young women from the host church under the direction of Sharon Cox, presented an inspiring worship by signing to several hymns.

A Bible study on "Wise Women of the Bible and in our Lives" was conducted by

Erin Crisfield.

Rev. Stanley Cox installed the new executive and Jackie Cruickshank, Simcoe, new president, closed the meeting.

St. Paul's, Glammis, hosted the Annual Meeting of **Bruce-Grey** Presbyterial on April 13.

Shirley Thompson, organist, established the theme for the day *Yearning for a Home* as we sang "There were ninety and nine". Greetings were extended by Kay Remus, President, Mrs. Stan Eby and Rev. Baker, Glammis.

We all enjoyed a dialogue with Beatrice Scott, missionary to India from 1941 until her retirement. This connected us personally to one reality of "home", the insecurity and inherent fear of entering a new culture, but also affirmed that one is "at home" when one lives with God.

After lunch, worship on the theme was led by Carol Mackowski and Gladys Eby, using 2 Corinthians. Although our personal identity is reflective of where we live, "home" is where we are living with God.

Guest speaker Allan Thompson, journalist and advocate re immigration and refugees through his work with the Toronto Star and the Federal Government, referred to many biblical refugees, including Mary and Joseph, reminding us that our ancestors who built our churches, communities and our country were refugees.

Area staff Erin Crisfield installed the officers.

Glengarry Presbyterial Annual Meeting was held March 22 at St. John's, Cornwall, the theme *New Beginnings*. Margaret Ferguson, president, constituted the meeting in prayer. Rev. John Crowdis welcomed everyone on behalf of St. John's and Annie MacRae outlined the various groups that are now active in their church.

Devotions and worship were led by the Avonmore WMS. Greetings from Seaway-Glengarry Presbytery were given by Lorna MacGregor.

The highlight of the meeting was guest speaker June Stevenson who reported on her visit to Cuba.

The Presbyterial of **Oak Ridges** gathered April 1 in St. Andrew's, King City, Ontario for their Annual Meeting.

The day began with a lively singalong, followed by worship.

President Ellen Parker presided over the program in her gentle, efficient manner. The reports were presented in a very dramatic way by several women, highlighting all the important and interesting events of local groups in the past year.

Special guest Charlotte Brown, Executive Secretary of the Society. Charlotte shared stories and experiences of her time in Japan and Taiwan.

June Campbell, President of Toronto Kingston Synodical installed the officers for 2000. The morning concluded with an inspirational communion service led by Rev. Lynda Reid.

At their May Rally, the *Mission of Communicating God's Ultimate Love* was the theme for **Brockville** Presbyterial. President Henny Donkersteeg and President of the host church, First, Brockville, Audrey Sine, welcomed all. Mary Moorhead, President of Council Executive brought greetings. Donna Wilson and Iva Stewart led worship.

Carol Ramer, organist of First Church, presented a Bach selection. Rev. David Jones led a historical, lively Bible Study and discussion on local mission.

Rev. Bert and Marilyn DeBruijn spoke about their trip to India, especially the Mizoram Christian community of Presbyterians. Slides, artifacts and music brought these colourful people alive.

Barrie Presbyterial Annual Meeting was held at St. Andrew's, Huntsville May 9. Outgoing President Jill Pardy, constituted the meeting. Helen Dafoe welcomed visitors on behalf of the Huntsville WMS and congregation.

Charlotte Duke and Kaye Barker of Port Carling conducted devotions on the theme *Joy*, based on James 1:1-8.

Annual reports were received and business conducted. Elaine Steele reveiwed several books from the display. Jean McNiven, assisted by Hilda Briggs, conducted a memorial service during which Ellen Heikkila sang an inspirational solo.

Following lunch, a hymn sing was conducted by Barbara Birtch, who also sang a delightful solo. Outgoing officers were recognized in verse by Jill Purdy. Rev. Ray Brown, Huntsville, installed the officers.

Guest speaker Lillian Sparling, who has completed two years as an English teacher in a Bible college in Taiwan gave an interesting account of her work.

On Fire For Mission... was the theme for the Provincial Family Gathering, 2000. This event was held on Saturday, May 13th in **Saskatoon** at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church.

Guest speaker was Rev. Joe Reed, missionary to Central America. Opening worship was led by Dr. Thomas Sellover. Singing was led by Terry Folster with Margaret Mazurkewich at the piano.

Extensive displays gave a glimpse of mission outreach work carried on by the Presbyterian Church in Canada under Presbyterians Sharing, PWS&D and Justice Ministries. Everyone had a quiz sheet to answer by reading the displays.

Everyone joined in the Mission Activity and had fun learning about the different approaches to mission. The young people presented a skit about mission. The day ended with worship led by Rev. Eric Muirhead, Moderator of the Presbytery of Northern Saskatchewan.

The Ailsa Craig WMS group led the annual **London** Presbyterial retreat at the Pearce Williams Christian Centre on May 4. To mark the 125 years of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, a segment of the program invited those attending to share memories of growing up in the church. Picnics, Robert Raikes certificates, the fun of choirs and Christmas concerts were among the fond remembrances shared.

Past Presidents of the Presbyterial attending were honoured with certificates of appreciation and sharing a festive cake.

- Those receiving certificates are left to right Eleanor McMillan, Juanita Coventry, Pauline Lindsay, Jean Middleton, Dorothy MacDonald, Catherine McMillan, Margaret Ford and Marian Weldon.

The 86th Annual Meeting of the **Calgary-McLeod** Presbyterial took place at Trinity, Calgary February 25-26. Our theme was *Looking Back...Looking Forward.* On the Friday evening, the Communion Service was led by Rev. Keith Wilcox with the Trinity Choir.

On Saturday the meeting opened with a short worship service led by Susan Carmichael followed by a Service of Remembrance presented by Margaret Brooker. Members were welcomed by Barbara Thorpe, President. Interspersed between reports Betty O'Donnell led in music and Joan Cruickshank provided excerpts from "A Lively Story", the WMS history book. Heather Swaney reviewed books. Elizabeth Freeborn read mission updates on the Barries and the Barsoums. Cathie Huber offered a prayer for the missionaries and for the grace.

Entertainment was provided by "The Notables". Marg Befus introduced Mary Moorhead, President of Council Executive, guest speaker. Mary spoke about the work of the WMS across Canada. Mary also installed the officers for 2000-2001. New President Priscilla Towers closed the meeting with prayer.

Bruce-Grey Gladys Sim Children's Rally was held at the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority Headquarters on May 6. Seventy-five children and adults attended.

Rev. Julia Morden of Port Elgin and Burgoyne Churches, opened with prayer and storytelling, followed by spirited singing led by Sheila Busch and Marion Rice, Burgoyne.

Colourful 'windsox', each displaying the names of the twelve disciples on the ribbon trails, were created by the children under the leadership of our 'crafters' Barbara and Danny Clarke, Hanover, and Margaret Newton and Luke Moore, Ayton.

Arita Droog, Durham, brought a new

Sock it Away for Mission!

Trinity Church, Calgary has been an aid congregation since its inception. The women of the congregation, wanting to take an active role in mission, set up a 'sock it away for mission' project. The group made small Christmas socks and gave them out to the congregation, asking each person to put a toonie a week in the sock until November. As they put their toonie into the sock, they were to pray for someone in need. The congregation was enthusiastic. The socks were quickly taken.

In October 1999, we became a formal group. Since then we have been busy with projects within our congregation, our city, and abroad. Our first project was to prepare and serve dinners to the children and families at Ronald McDonald House. We also helped a family at Christmas and wrote to 15 overseas missionaries at Thanksgiving.

In honour of a beautiful person we knew, we named our group The Mavis Hyndman, WMS. Her kindness and Christian example inspired us and we hope that in her honour we can be a group she would be proud to be associated with.

Mission has no boundaries. This is why we do not limit projects to our own group but involve the whole congregation. This group has offered a new dimension to the spiritual life of our community. We are excited about future projects we want to get involved in. No congregation should ever feel they are too small to do important things. You, too, can make a difference.

banner made from blocks submitted by the WMS groups, and enhanced with special lettering by Joanne Heerschap, Holstein.

More fun, food and games rounded off the day. The freewill offering was donated to Habitat for Humanity.

The Spring Rally of **Huron-Perth** was held in Knox, Mitchell, the theme *Bloom Where You're Planted.* There was a good display of articles for the Camp Kintail shower.

Vice-president Shirley Aitcheson presided. Following a welcome by Jean Edmunds, Ina McMillan introduced guest speaker Barbara Hicks who spoke on the importance of forgiveness and the need to be a spoon for Christ, not a knife which cuts or a fork which pricks. Mrs. Hicks has worked at the United Church's Camp Minesetung for 18 years and has the nickname Spoony.

Janet Gibson, St. Marys, gave a talk on her family heirlooms and collections.

Following a salad supper, the Mitchell Presbyterian Bell Ringers played Amazing Grace, and others, and accompanied Marion McKay who sang a solo.

Audrey Vorstenbosch accompanied "In the Garden" on the organ.

Evening vespers were taken by Avonton women, Barbara Taylor, Barbara Scott, Rita McKay and Jean Aitcheson using the theme. Courtesy remarks were given by Jean Evans of Motherwell.

LOCAL

New members and 'fresh faces' have not come forward to revitalize the work of the WMS in **Durham** Church, and the Auxiliary formally disbanded at its December, 1999 final meeting after 112 years. The Auxiliary was organized in 1887, and by 1895 there were 24 members.

In 1933 Irene Stringer, missionary on furlough from India visited the area and

CIRCULATION NEWS

Katherine Allen
Circulation Manager

In mid-August a mailing was sent to all Glad Tidings secretaries/contact persons whom we had listed from last fall, unless we received a change during the year. Hopefully your group has received this mailing which contains the subscription list and helpful information for promotion ideas. If by mid-September the Glad Tidings secretary/contact person in your congregation has not received the mailing she should check with the local post office or contact our office.

September is when the Glad Tidings secretary for your congregation will begin to collect subscriptions for the Glad Tidings magazine. You can help by having your subscription money ready to give to the Glad Tidings secretary when she begins collecting.

If your group has disbanded, you can still subscribe to the magazine. You can either appoint a contact person for your congregation or subscribe individually. (Please notify the Glad Tidings secretary or contact person of your desire to still receive the magazine.) It is helpful to still return the subscription list to the Glad Tidings office as we need the information on the lists to make any appropriate changes.

Please make sure that your address is correct on the subscription list before the Glad Tidings secretary returns it to the office. Especially check to see if your address includes a postal box or street/apartment number.

assisted in forming the Irene Stringer Evening Auxiliary. The Senior Auxiliary became known as the Afternoon Auxiliary in 1952. Then in an effort to involve younger women, a third group, Trinity Group, was formed in 1962. This group caters for funeral luncheons, weddings, sponsors the junior Choir and assists the Presbyterial. The 100th anniversary of Durham WMS was celebrated in 1988 with a special morning service by all three groups, at which the speaker was Rev. Richard Fee, then in Nigeria.

Over the years members have supported Presbyterial, attending and hosting events. In 1991 our church hosted the April Southwestern Ontario Synodical Annual Meeting.

At the January 23, 2000 morning service, with past and present members present, Rev. Case Vanbodegam gave a brief history of the WMS. In the church hall following the service a carnation was presented to each member.

Blanche Janet White passed away on February 28, 2000. Blanche was president of Avonton Evening Auxiliary, **Avonton, Ontario.** She was a member of the Auxiliary for over 40 years.

Blanche was a special friend to everyone, an active caterer in the area, a loving mother and grandmother, and a true Christian.

The congregation of **St. Andrew's, Corunna**, presented a Certificate of Recognition and a Youth Pin to Steven Mathieson on Easter Sunday for his years of service and dedication. He also founded 'The Sister Catherine Milk Fund'.

MISSION AWARENESS SUNDAY
April 30, 2000

- Pictured left to right top row: Dorothy McClean, Marion Bowler, Eleanor Petersen, Joan Pattenden and President Grace Bragg. Bottom row left to right: Helen Beaugrand, Carroll Moreland, Marlene Lane and May Maxwell. Front is Rev. Colin Cross.

For their first annual **Mission Awareness Sunday**, the WMS of **St. Andrew's, Penticton, BC** conducted most of the Sunday service, with greeters at the door, taking up the collection and providing refreshments after the service. Members took turns with readings and prayers. The sermon was given by Helen Beaugrand.

On display was our beautiful banner of "LOVE" made by Chris Miller, Rose McCarthy and Brenda Willard.

Each member (ten) of **Osgoode** WMS, Vernon, Ontario took part in **Mission Awareness Sunday** April 30, 2000, using the guidelines sent out by Margaret Robertson, Program Secretary.

The COC handed out bulletins and acted as greeters (which led to the

- Osgoode, Vernon: top left to right: Lorna Doig, Rev. Cathy Victor, Lena Miskiman and Children of the Church.

having them participate more often in future). Profiles were used in the display. Many people had not realized how involved the church is in mission.

Minister Rev. Cathy Victor took the Children's Feature. Using a skein of wool, she began at the choir and went down all through the congregation, explaining how we are all connected in the mission of the church.

Cathy mentioned many of our current missionaries by using a tote bag of artifacts from some of the countries they are involved in. The COC followed through in their study downstairs, making an African

Left to right front row: Grace McGill, Betty Marchington, Betty Birchall, Barbara Griffith. Back row left to right: Eileen Barron, Rev. Wendy Lampman, Susan Grimwood, Rev. Elizabeth Kidnew.

'Kufi' patterned hat.

It was a very worshipful and informative event, well worth repeating annually.

Kirk on the Hill, Fonthill successfully celebrated Mission Awareness Sunday with each participant in the service being a member. Speaker, Rev. Wendy Lampman, a recent graduate of Knox, and minister-elect to Tiverton charge, is also a WMS member.

Kirk welcomed members from St. Andrew's, Welland. Tea was provided by WMS women. Display boards highlighted our history, the current Cuba study and photos of WMS activities.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Mrs. Ellen Bahm
St. Andrew's, Arnprior, ON

Florence Denney
Baxter, Angus, ON

Blanche Janet White
Avonton, ON

Nora Turner
Carberry, MB

Mrs. Helen MacFarlane
Durham, ON

Mrs. Elvin Black
Knox, Grand Valley, ON

Mrs. Kathleen Cherriere
St. Columba, Hamilton, ON

Laura Hamilton
Cobden, ON

Margaret Irwin
St. John's, Pittsburgh, Kingston, ON

Mrs. Hester Tinney
Knox, Kintyre, Rodney, ON

Mrs. Christina Smart
St. Andrew's, Lindsay, ON

Mrs. Doris Murdoch
Elmwood, London, ON
(formerly of Weston, ON)

Thomasina (Ina) Dobie
Chippawa, Niagara Falls, ON

Marion Cameron
Gladys Ferguson
St. Andrew's, Perth, ON

Mrs. Florrine Campbell
First, Port Colborne, ON

Marguerite Wood
First, Prince Rupert, BC

Mrs. Florance Gregor
Duff's, Puslinch, ON

Elsie MacKay
Richmond Hill, ON

Bette Gene Shanks
St. Andrew's, Sarnia, ON

Mrs. Marion McCreight
St. Andrew's, Scarborough, ON
(formerly of St. John's, Toronto, ON)

Mabel Hopson
Janet Stewart
St. Mary's, ON

Betty Campbell
Thornhill, ON

Mrs. Harold (Laura) Hendry
Knox, Tiverton, ON

Donald Deebrah,
Glebe, Toronto, ON

Miss Jean Campbell
Weston, ON

www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd

Photo: Food distribution center, Ethiopia. Richard Fee, PWS&D

Three years of drought have brought Ethiopia to the edge of famine.
But it's not too late to make a difference.
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Glad Tidings

November/December 2000

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GLAD TIDINGS reports on aspects of the Women's Missionary Society on all levels.

GLAD TIDINGS challenges concerned Christians to reflect on their faith through articles and reports related to mission and social justice issues, locally, nationally and internationally.

GLAD TIDINGS through its content, encourages readers to become informed, educated, inspired and motivated to action.

GLAD TIDINGS provides a forum for a broad spectrum of opinion and information, thus the views expressed in features, news reports, letters and book reviews are not necessarily endorsed by the WMS (WD) or by the Editor.

Cover Photo: Karen Dunlop (see story page 3).

Correction to Sept/Oct 2000 page 13: Florence Ross is secretary for East Toronto Presbyterial, not co-president of West Toronto Presbyterial.

"And a little child shall lead them."

The Jesus House

by Rosemary Doran

Our then-four-year-old granddaughter, Petra, was asked one day what she wanted most for Christmas. Her immediate reply was "A Jesus house." When I heard about this, I was somewhat puzzled. I knew about Barbie houses, Kelly houses and Cabbage Patch houses but - a Jesus house?

A little questioning revealed that at daycare Petra had been introduced to a manger scene. The daycare children had had a wonderful time moving and placing the figures, so what could a four-year-old want more for Christmas than her very own Jesus house, which she could play with any time she wanted?

I immediately had a delightful image of Petra organising Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus and introducing them to her other toys and dolls, like Barbie, Ken and Skipper. All of them already know one another and amicably visit one another's "houses".

I had visions of the baby Jesus going out in the car with them, doing the shopping, going to the beach, eating dinner. There was no limit to my imagination. And then I began to smile at how ridiculous my ideas were.

But wait a minute - maybe that's not right. It dawned on me that there was actually an important truth in what I was thinking. Isn't that exactly where Jesus should be - in the car with us, at the store, on the beach, eating dinner? Isn't that where our faith says he really is - not stuck forever in the manger, but actually part of people's lives? Isn't that where Jesus is supposed to be, if we let him?

- Petra Woods (above), five years in June, with brother Nathan, at seven weeks.

This is a good question to ask in the Christmas season. Do we really want Jesus to be anywhere other than in the manger? Because, rest assured, if we let him out of the manger, he's going to cause trouble. The Babe of Bethlehem is also the Christ of the Cross who disturbs our very comfortable way of going.

When Petra was asked why she wanted "a Jesus house", she replied "so that I can play with it all the time, not just at Christmas." There's another great truth. Not only do we sometimes want to keep Jesus in the manger and out of our lives, but we may also want to keep him in Christmas and only have to think of him once a year. We may not want to have him around all the time.

We like Christmas. We love the story with all the bells and whistles - angels, shepherds, wise men, the animals, the holy family. We come and worship, rightly and genuinely, and are

moved and inspired to feel good and holy - for the moment.

But then Christmas is over. We put away the manger and the figures and sometimes also close the book on the story until next time. Unlike Petra, we don't want Jesus around all the time, because we might be doing things we don't want him to know about, or not doing things he would really like us to do.

The Christmas story is about real people. From the very start Jesus is not a doll, living in a doll's house, nor a figure in a creche. He is a real, live person, uniquely related to God and gifted by God to live out his life in such a way that the rest of us can get things right.

This is why it is essential not to keep him forever in the manger but to let him out to be with Barbie, Ken and Skipper, with Ann and Peter and James, with Caroline and Henry and Jane, with you and with me, whoever and wherever we are. This is why it is essential not to lock him into making a mere annual appearance but to recognise that he is with us all the time, challenging, pushing, disturbing, encouraging, comforting, loving us and ever leading us home.

Petra got her Jesus house before Christmas. She enjoys playing with it whenever she wants to, making the baby a part of whatever she's doing. We could learn from her. To borrow a word from Isaiah "And a little child shall lead them".

- Rev. Rosemary Doran has just retired as minister at Riverside Church, Windsor, Ontarior. She is a past president of the WMS Council Executive.

The Silences of Christmas[1]

A Christmas Service of Worship
by June Campbell

June Campbell is President of Toronto and Kingston Synodical and a member of the Editorial Working Group of Council Executive.

Call to Worship:
Leader: And he will be called
People: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Leader: Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
People: Be still
Leader: And know that I am God.

Opening Prayer: Loving God, quiet our minds and hearts as we meditate on the "silences" surrounding the birth of your Son. Amen

Hymn: Infant holy, Infant lowly # 143 (1997 BOP), #123 (1972 BOP)

Scripture: Luke 1:1-23

Message: *Zechariah* (Readers should read slowly and clearly, pausing briefly after questions, to allow listeners a moment of reflection.)

"And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their proper time."(Luke 1:20 NIV)

Silence imposed. Seemingly a reprimand. But God is giving notice that within this silence the purposes of God will be accomplished. What happened within Zechariah during this long time of imposed silence? What would happen to you? To me? Would we feel 'set aside'?

Would we observe others more, see their problems more clearly, perhaps be shocked with how little we had cared before? Would Zechariah's advanced age help him to use this time for deep reflection, or would he just be very impatient and frustrated?

Zechariah had not received God's news freely, believing and rejoicing. Even though silence seemed to be a punishment, does God sometimes chastise to produce good?

When in your life have you been 'set aside'?

Oswald Chambers says: "We are able to command what we are able to explain, consequently, it is natural to seek to explain."[2] Zechariah could not explain this so he could not believe, initially, when faced with mystery.

But there is evidence of the depth of Zechariah's thinking in his prophecy over his son, John after his birth, (Luke 1:67). Such deep thinking doesn't come easily, and often, with us human beings it needs to be encouraged by imposed times apart.

Scripture: Luke 1: 24-25

Message: *Elizabeth*

Elizabeth "remained in seclusion" for five months, even though the Lord had "taken away her disgrace among the people" of not being able to have children. What a time of adjustment it must have been!

Although she was in seclusion it seemed to be a time of rejoicing: "The Lord

has done this for me....In these days he has shown his favor" - and a time of marvelling at the predictions. Overwhelmed by it all, she considered these matters in her solitude, thinking about her own and Zechariah's past, about what was happening in the present and these wonderful revelations about their son's future.

Scripture: Luke 1: 39-56

Message: *Mary and Elizabeth*

Mary and Elizabeth had three months together, away from others, for wonderment and rejoicing, for the practical planning that women do when expecting babies. God provided Mary with this companionship with one who could share the wonder of the promises she had been given. In Luke 2:19 we read that Mary "pondered these things in her heart" - another attitude of solitude.

And what of Joseph? Even when he was considering divorcing his espoused wife, Matthew tells us he would have done it quietly. After he received the angel's message, Joseph showed quiet dignity and confidence in God, and in the character of his beloved Mary, quelling any gossip.

Prayer: Lord God, help us to inwardly listen for your messages to us through your Word and all your means of grace. Help us to have these same attitudes of belief and wonder, of rejoicing and confidence in your will. Amen.

Hymn: O little town of Bethlehem # 165 (1997 BOP), #130 (1972 BOP)

Offering and Offertory Prayer: We give these gifts, O God, with awe and amazement at your gift to us of your son, our Lord Jesus Christ. We dedicate them to your use in Jesus' name. Amen.

Leader: Simeon, moved by the Spirit, took Jesus in his arms and praised God, saying:
People: "Sovereign Lord as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace.
Leader: "For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people,
People: "A light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel" (Luke 2:28).

Message:

In this season of celebration of his birth that we have made into such a busy time, often in his name, can we take time to personally worship him? Stephen Bryant states:

Embedded in these stories are spiritual practices that enhance our awareness of God:

Be still before the Lord, and wait patiently for him. Psalm 37:7

listening, prayer, silence, solitude, spiritual conversation. We keep the season holy by building these practices into our plans. Set apart a special time and place for God and listen for the cry of the Christ Child in your heart and world.[1]

Do we allow ourselves to be quiet enough to be moved by the Spirit? Do we receive Jesus, born, crucified and risen, and know the hallelujah difference this makes in our lives? Can we then share with others how good it is to know and feel God's love? Let us ask God to lead us in these quiet ways.

Closing Prayer: Our Lord and God, enable us, give us the desire to ponder the meaning of your coming as we travel with you through these coming days of Christmas.

Hymn: Child in the manger #136 (1972 BOP) / Christians, awake #135 (1997 BOP)

Blessing: Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love. Amen.

1. June credits the idea of the "silences of Christmas" to Stephen D. Bryant, the Editor and Publisher of the Upper Room, Daily Devotional guide, November-December 1999, from his editorial "Paying Attention".

2. Chambers, Oswald. *The Mystery of Believing. My Utmost for His Highest.*

Christmas Tree

Once again we hail
A Christmas tree into our lives
We adorn it
With the well worn chains
Of bittersweet memories:
the bells that tolled
And those that fell silent,
And our stars
That shone so brightly
In days gone by.

To others
This is mere tinsel.
Unworthy of comment...
Of course we don't see
Anything worth mentioning
Of their tree's adorning.

Lini R. Grol

-Scissorcut illustration by Lini R. Grol.

Happy Birthday

by Marlene Lane

Once more it is the Christmas season.... My mind drifts back to a Christmas several years ago. I was in the kitchen making cookies. I could see my three-year-old daughter in the living room. She was so excited she couldn't be still. Her little eyes were glowing as she watched the tree lights flick on and off.

When she thought I wasn't looking, she would poke at a present or two under the tree.

I wanted this excitement and joy for her, but I wondered if I could make sure that the true meaning would always be part of her Christmas celebration.

I took the little nativity scene off the shelf and we sat on the floor. I asked her what big day was coming? She replied, Christmas! I asked her what Christmas was about and she answered, Jesus' birthday!

Then began a new Christmas tradition in our house. As we looked at the nativity, I told her how this was the biggest birthday party ever because everyone in the whole world was invited. Like all parties, not everyone would come, but they could if they wanted to.

I told her we give each other presents in remembrance of Jesus, who gave us the greatest gift of all, when he gave his life so that our sins would be forgiven and we could live with him forever.

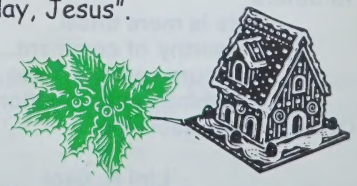
After Christmas dinner that year I brought out a birthday cake with a single candle and we sang "Happy Birthday, Jesus". I carried this new tradition on every year.

When my daughter married and had two children of her own, I carried the tradition on with them.

As the children got a little older my daughter decided it would be easier to celebrate Christmas at her home rather than bringing everything to my house. At that time I was fortunate to be able to spend two winters in California.

My first winter home, my daughter invited me to spend Christmas at her house.

What a joy I felt when at the end of a lovely meal, my daughter carried in a beautiful birthday cake with a single candle and we all sang "Happy Birthday, Jesus".



China Memories

by Doris M. Johnston

"I gave you this elephant when I was six, didn't I, Mum," asked my daughter Sandee, who was visiting. She had offered to help sort out my china cabinet. "Let's throw it out. The trunk has a nick in it."

"No." I put in quickly, "that was the first gift you chose for me all by yourself."

Sandee pulled a face. "But we have to start somewhere," she protested. "You have so many ornaments and dishes that your cabinet is beginning to sag in the middle."

"Exaggeration," I told her fondly.

Although the cabinet was full to over flowing, it was still as solid as the day her dad and I had purchased it forty years ago. I glanced over the dishes and other decorative objects it held.

There was the cake plate with holes to put a ribbon through that my grandmother had given to me just before she died. Some day I would pass it on to one of my girls. Beside it was a beautiful rose cup and saucer.

It was a replacement for another favourite that had met with an accident when the boys were playing ball in the house. The three of them had spent two weeks allowance on its purchase. Today they would need a substantial increase in their allowance to afford to buy it.

"How can I help you sort out this and that if you won't throw anything away?" Sandee sounded a little frustrated.

"Well, I have at least thirty cups and saucers," I began, "and use only about fifteen. We could start with them."

We placed them on the dining room table. Seven had been gifts from the children in my Sunday school classes over the years. Another five were from my own children. I knew the violet cup and saucer and the one with the purple thistle had belonged to my mother.

I couldn't recall where the others had come from, but they were gifts from caring friends. I was attached to them. I picked a cup that was wider than it was high.

"Here, Sandee, tea always gets cold fast in this cup. I'll put it in the kitchen."

Sandee laughed. "And you'll never use it," she predicted. "Just put some cactus in it and take it to your Wings class bazaar." We set that cup and saucer aside.

"What about these heads?" Three clay replicas of Churchill, Picasso and one that resembled a monk were just about ready to be dropped into the garbage.

"I made those when I first took up pottery," I reflected happily. "Perhaps I could have improved upon the monk. In those days I thought I might become a sculptor." I ran my fingers over Churchill's strong chin. "I think I made a pretty good job of them, however."

"Yes, you did. Guess we'll save them too." Sandee sighed and watched silently as I picked up a china tabby and stroked its striped back. She placed an arm over my shoulders.

"You can't throw away memories as easily as egg cartons, can you, Mum," she asked affectionately.

You can't throw away memories, can you?

I shook my head and smiled back. "Let's have coffee," I suggested, "then we'll decide where to put another china cabinet. You know, dear, with ten grandchildren I can look forward to many more 'china' memories."

Compiled by Eve Stickland

Faith - Makes all things possible.
Hope - Makes all things bright.
Love - Makes all things easy.

- Benjamin R. De Jong, Uncle Ben's Quotebook, p 23, 1976.

Apologies to Eve for spelling her last name incorrectly in the last two issues.

Shoes From Heaven

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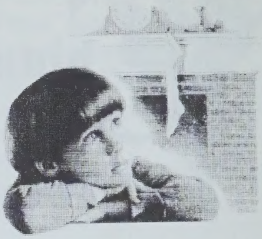


Tonight

Dearest Lord, tonight
I will not ask for anything.
Tonight, no matter what my troubles,
Or my fears,
I will not ask for anything.

Tonight, I will thank you for my blessings,
For my work,
For my home,
And for my loved ones...

Tonight, I will remember that troubles fade,
And blessings last forever.

Tonight, Lord, I will open my arms wide
To your will,
And to all the joy that comes with it
And I will say...
Amen

Roberta G. McClelland is a religion writer from London, ON who has been published in Christian magazines throughout Canada and the United States.

Carpenter's Work

in Bethlehem
the newborn babe
that starry night
had a wooden trough
for his first bed:
a carpenter's son
should feel at home
they said.

in the workshop
at Nazareth
the child though young
made useful gifts
from scraps of wood:
a carpenter's son
grows wise they said
and good.

apprentice lad
a few years on
learned how to make
the wooden yokes
for oxen teams:
a carpenter's work
for him they said
it seems.

grown to a man
he chose a crew
and wooden boat
on Galilee
to spread the Word:
the carpenter
a teacher now
they heard.

tables of wood
in Temple court
put to misuse
raising his wrath
were overturned:
the Carpenter
came to right wrong
they learned

they made a cross
of rough hewn wood
and set it up
on Calvary:
and crucified
the Carpenter
"Forgive them", prayed
and died.

on his return
he gathered wood
and built a fire
and made a meal
to feed his crew:
the Carpenter
lit fir and faith
anew.

Elizabeth Symon

The Angel's Message
Luke 2:10-14

A Christmas Puzzle
by Jim Phillips

H	E	F	A	O	J	H	C	Q	L	A	C
M	E	S	S	I	A	H	Q	N	G	I	S
W	R	A	P	P	E	D	R	Z	T	G	R
C	G	A	V	B	N	J	I	Y	N	D	O
P	B	F	P	E	A	C	E	I	S	R	V
I	F	R	V	E	N	K	Y	E	W	U	A
N	D	A	V	I	D	L	D	M	E	O	F
T	E	I	S	H	Y	U	Y	Y	N	I	L
H	N	D	D	P	T	R	X	H	D	V	C
W	R	C	H	I	L	D	O	S	O	A	L
Y	O	J	T	A	E	R	G	L	O	S	O
V	B	L	E	G	N	A	K	O	G	M	T
U	U	G	V	O	W	K	N	R	O	B	H
M	A	N	G	E	R	N	U	D	O	G	T

BUT THE ANGEL SAID TO THEM, "DO NOT BE AFRAID; FOR SEE - I AM BRINGING YOU GOOD NEWS OF GREAT JOY FOR ALL THE PEOPLE: TO YOU IS BORN THIS DAY IN THE CITY OF DAVID A SAVIOUR, WHO IS THE MESSIAH, THE LORD. THIS WILL BE SIGN FOR YOU: YOU WILL FIND A CHILD WRAPPED IN BANDS OF CLOTH AND LYING IN A MANGER. AND SUDDENLY THERE WAS WITH THE ANGEL A MULTITUDE OF THE HEAVENLY HOST, PRAISING GOD AND SAYING, "GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST HEAVEN, AND ON EARTH PEACE AMONG THOSE WHOM HE FAVORS!" (NRSV)

by Jean Leedale Hobson

The popular song declares that "It's Beginning to Look a Lot like Christmas". Or is it? Where's the panic that used to propel the clock and the calendar on fast-forward all through December? Where's the list pinned to the corkboard on the wall, that unfriendly, ominous reminder of all the things yet undone?

I might as well face the fact that the old type of Christmas has been relegated, inevitably, to a plateau lower than where my feet now stand, irretrievable no matter how I might wish to have it back. But, do I really want all that panic, chaos, exhaustion at this stage of my life?

Better, I keep reminding myself, to appreciate and enjoy the freedom from the stresses of busy years when I wore more hats than my head could balance - wife, mother, cook, gardener, peacemaker, dressmaker, amateur veterinarian and chauffeur. Still, I guess I'm entitled to some normal nostalgia.

This is senior status, and I might as well go with the flow. I have the feeling that this stage has a lot going for it at that!

The first snowflakes are feathering the window, and I think back to those winters before we were a two-car family (come to think of it, we never became a two-car family, the kids grew up too quickly). Then, those years ago, I struggled with snowsuits, bundled the baby up, pushed the buggy through slush with the other kids dragging along, all in a Christmas shopping attempt that failed miserably. This year, I can do my gift shopping early in the week to avoid the crowds - and stop for coffee with a friend.

Wrapping my purchases won't mean waiting until everyone is safely in bed; hiding the parcels so well that I'll forget where they are until far into the new year. It won't require the patience of Job to keep helpful little fingers out of the paper, ribbons, tags, or sampling chocolates from the box for Aunt Jane.

Holiday baking will be a breeze. No small fingers smothering fancy cookies with zillions of sprinkles or icing lopsided faces on warm gingerbread men, or sampling more cherries and nuts than end up in the fruitcake. I can spend hours arranging dainty goodies in pretty boxes to take to shut-ins, receiving as well as giving the Christmas spirit as I humbly accept their thanks and hugs.

This year I will attend the grandchildren's school concerts without the stress put on parents - the frenzied costume making, the coaching of small, scared actors, calming the jitters of a Joseph or a Mary. This time I'll smile indulgently at forgotten lines. I'll grin (without a red face) if our little shepherd trips up a Wise Man or falls into the cradle.

When Christmas Eve arrives, it won't mean nagging at excited children to go to bed, while panicking at all the jobs I can't attack until they are asleep. It used to be that dawn might well break and I'd still be finishing up a doll's sweater,

or assembling a multi-pieced toy, making the turkey stuffing and peeling mountains of potatoes to save time next day.

How different now, how peaceful, how silent in my small apartment. But the candlelight service at church, an hour with friends up the street, a classic movie on the VCR, or chance to quietly read with glorious seasonal background music, and bedtime of my own choosing - who could ask for anything more?

Daybreak this year won't have me jolted out of my sleep, my bed a trampoline under exuberant little acrobats before I'm groggily hauled downstairs to see the stockings hung by the chimney with care. I'll be able to sit leisurely over coffee, listen to a service on radio, and decide which dress is the most festive to wear to the family dinner.

I'll assume the role of a pampered guest at my daughter's home, being gently ushered out of the kitchen, everything's under control, thank you, Mom. No harassed homemaker/hostess madness, but a chance to read a new storybook to a five-year-old, to admire a model car built by a school boy, to cuddle a fretful baby and lull it to sleep with an age-old song remembered from long ago.

At the dinner table I can digest the wonderful meal, no jumping up and down to pass the vegetables, no checking on the oven where pies are warming; just sitting as any invited guest, looking around with pride, love and thankfulness at being among my growing family.

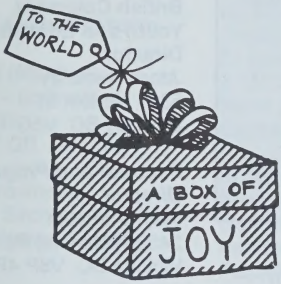
I somehow managed to survive the hectic Christmases of my younger, more active years, amazing as that seems in retrospect. Now I've reached the matriarch stage, gratified that the seeds sown in young minds and hearts have produced this harvest of good human beings. My lifestyle has undergone another change, but Christmas itself remains a constant.

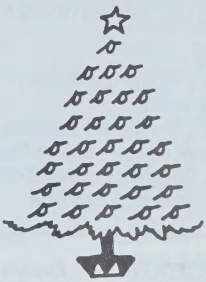
Carols still fill the air in churches and shopping malls alike; coloured lights frame doorways and windows along the street; wide-eyed children wait in line to whisper a wish list in Santa's ear, and the age old wish for peace on earth, goodwill, joy and love never loses its meaningful warmth.

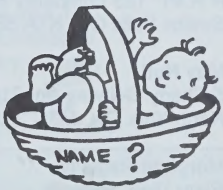
'Tis the season to look back, yes, but also to measure every moment of the present, and to look forward to future Christmases as the book of life opens up on new chapters.

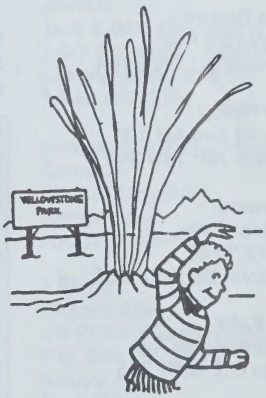
A Christmas Mystery

Can you tell what all the pictures below have in common? (Clue: You might find them all in one book at church!)
See if you can identify the message or title of each picture? Write it on the lines under the picture.









Solution on page 37.

Source: ***Solving Bible Mysteries*** by Joy MacKenzie
(Zondervan Publishing House,1994), available at your local bookstore or by calling 800-727-3480.

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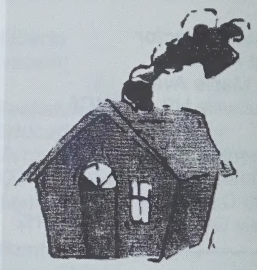
MYTH: Habitat for Humanity gives their houses away for free.



TRUTH:
Habitat for Humanity does not give their houses away for free. Volunteers in 51 different communities in all 10 provinces work with families in need building their first safe, decent and affordable home. The family then assumes a long-term, no-interest mortgage.

For more information and to contact your nearest affiliate, call Habitat for Humanity 1-800-667-5137.
Email: habitat@habitat.ca.
Web: www.habitat.ca

Building Homes Building Hope
Habitat for Humanity

CELEBRATING: Children, Teens, Young Adults

Children and Adults Unite!

In a quiet little town in southeastern Ontario, a warm hearted congregation bustles with activity. The WMS of Knox, Morrisburg makes a special effort to provide events for children and youth in their neighbourhood. Approximately ten children attend regular monthly meetings which include singing, crafts, games, study and worship. Margaret Reynolds, Myrtle Wingeat and Betty Gillard lead the program.

The children studied Central America in 1999, followed by Cuba. They were entertained by Joe Reed, liaison for the Presbyterian Churches in Cuba and Central America, and also had a glimpse of Venezuela using slides and other materials from the World Day of Prayer resources.

On a warm spring afternoon in March this year, women of the WMS joined the children and some of their parents after school at the church to meet with June Stevenson, Editor of the Glad Tidings. June spoke about her visit to Cuba in 1997, and showed the study materials she had written. She passed around pictures and encouraged questions from the audience, especially the children. They were taught a few words in Spanish, including how to say, "What is your name?" And "My name is...." This special event concluded with a potluck supper for all.

In May, a group of Explorers attended the Heart and Stroke Community Appreciation Evening when they were presented with a certificate of appreciation for ten years of the group's involvement in the February Roses for Heart Blitzes.

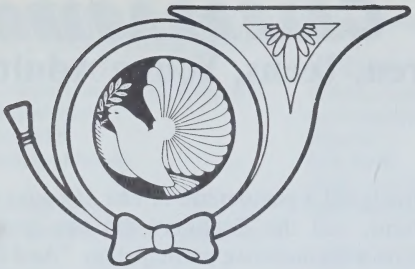
At Family Night this year, the COC group did a pantomime of *The Miracles of Jesus*, and the Explorers did two group skits with audience participation, "And the Walls Came Tumbling Down", and "So What?"

Their outreach includes special offerings for the Learning/Sharing projects, money sent to the general fund of the WMS, and letters and monetary support for a foster child in Nepal. They have packed shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child and sent money towards famine relief in Mozambique.

Locally, the young people are a very visible presence as they visit shut-ins, make and deliver treats for clients of Meals on Wheels and for seniors' residences. Family and friends are entertained by group raps, plays and singing. They can be seen assembling a float of the nativity scene for the Santa Claus parade or participating in spring clean-up of the church yard.

There is fun and games for the children also as they join in miniature golf, barbecues and through the year make a variety of crafts such as wall hangings, Santas from light bulbs, angels from pasta, and painting on old slates from the church roof - thanks to the '98 Ice Storm! There is not a dull moment from the time the children eagerly arrive until it is time to go home.

Leaders hope to raise awareness of the struggles for survival of children around the world, and an increased concern and love for others through exposure to Bible studies and world issues. In this warm Christian environment, the children and youth are developing their skills in public prayer. These will indeed be the leaders of the future!



Hannah's Millennium Wish: No More Poverty

By Cynthia Carter

Hannah gazed out the classroom window, the sun shining brilliantly, the earth's floor covered with an abundant blanket of snow, glistening like diamonds in the light. With Christmas break arriving soon, Hannah's mind was laden with anticipation of the upcoming holiday. Visions of pine-scented Christmas trees and delicious peppermint patties only available at Christmas seized her thoughts.

Suddenly the school bell rang. Forgetting her daydream, Hannah regained attention.

"Hold on class. You're not getting away this easily," said Mrs. Harrell with a smirk. "I'm assigning an oral 500 word presentation on your Christmas wish for the millennium. It's due Friday, so you have two days. Oh yes, and this is worth a quarter of next terms' marks!"

Hannah was dumbfounded by the essay her teacher had assigned. Other students were red with anger and started to protest about such little notice. Hannah didn't want to get involved in the skirmish, so she silently walked home.

"Hi mom, I'm home," yelled Hannah to an empty house. Surprised by the silence, Hannah discovered a note on the refrigerator. It was from her mother to inform her that she went shopping and reminding Hannah she was helping at the soup kitchen's meal program that night.

Later that night, Hannah wearily left the soup kitchen. She walked down a short street to her home. An array of Christmas lights brightened her path.

Quietly, Hannah entered her house. Realizing everyone was asleep, she silently tiptoed up the stairway and into her room. Too tired to concentrate on the essay, she fell asleep.

"Hannah," yelled her mother the next morning. "Honey, wake up! Remember you are not going to school today. You're going with Pastor Dave to serve at the soup kitchen's Christmas meal program."

Throwing on an old pair of jeans and a sweater, Hannah came fleeing downstairs. Grabbing a banana to eat on the way, she rushed out the door to the car. The car departed, making it to the soup kitchen in a few minutes.

Hannah met Pastor Dave inside the kitchen. He handed her an apron

and potato scoop. For the rest of the day Hannah kept busy by scooping potatoes for the needy. She noticed how caring and grateful they were. They had almost nothing, but were willing to give away whatever they had.

After a long day, the pastor dropped Hannah off at her house. Remembering her speech, she sat down with a piece of paper. She worked vigorously until midnight, and finally completed the essay, just before she fell asleep on the desk.

The next day at school was hectic. Mrs. Harrell's class was first, and as fate would have it, Hannah was first to present. She nervously walked to the front of the class and cleared her voice.

"My Christmas wish for the millennium is to eliminate poverty. The last couple of days I've volunteered at the soup kitchen. The needy there have nearly nothing, but at the same time they are so generous and appreciative."

As Hannah continued, her peers listened intently, devouring her every word.

Finally, she finished her speech and breathed a sigh of relief. She looked over at Mrs. Harrell inquisitively.

"Congratulation Hannah," said Mrs. Harrell, "that's definitely A plus!"

Hannah beamed as she said to herself, now that's a perfect Christmas gift!

From: Dorothy Henderson
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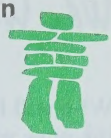
Subject: Wow



CANADA YOUTH 2000

I continue to be amazed and awed at the excellence, enthusiasm and youthful faithfulness of Canada Youth 2000. I am in the midst of writing thank you notes to the leaders and am struggling to find words that adequately describe the event. Someone (who doesn't praise lightly) said that it was the best thing our Church has ever done. Brian was there as an administrator and has written this (which beautifully describes the events):

The 600 Presbyterian youth at the conference looked like pretty typical young people with the exception that they all shared the same enthusiasm for the Lord Jesus Christ. While attending CY2000 participants took part in a number of workshops, opportunities for local mission excursions, and daily high praise and worship services featuring incredible contemporary Christmas music and some of the most dynamic and motivational preaching I have ever heard-preaching which had a decidedly reformed theology and a message of grace and worthiness, messages of love and concern for youth you live in a society of judgement and pressures of conformity. I only wish I could better articulate more fully how wonderful it was to see young people having an opportunity to live in such a blessed environment of grace and love. I am confident that the youth have left CY2000 in the knowledge that they are "living strones" and this will dramatically impact the way they live their lives and how they perceive "their" Presbyterian Church.

Cynthia Carter of Kouchibouguac, New Brunswick, had her award-winning story published in the Moncton, N.B. Times-Transcript last December 23, 1999. It is reprinted with permission. Cynthia, a Grade 9 student, attends Knox Presbyterian Church, Kouchibouoguac.

Who Will Heal the Children?

Who will heal the children
the ones with half-moons braised on their flanks
and the ashes of stars on their fingertips
they wear a ring of black roses around their wrist
and love is the slash across a crooked smile

Who will heal these children?

I will, said the one, known as Physician
I am in you
and of you
we share the same breath
I feel the shifting of your bones
and the scraping of your soul
for I too carried the anger of men on my back
and anguish poured from the wound in my side

Who will hear the children
the ones who sleep in broken rhythm
and know only the treason of their keepers
they harbor secrets beneath the skin
carry silence to shield the sudden clench of hear

Who will hear these children?

I will, said the One, known as Comforter
I am in you
and of you
we share the same breath
I gather your cries into a calm sabbath
to still the wrench of broken dreams
for I too heard the bleak hour conspire against me
and the blade of deceit was sharpened on my rib

Who will save the children
the ones whose spirits struggle to survive
their hearts remain anonymous and they belong to no one
their eyes hang down like broken petals
and even the stem of their soul is weak

Who will save these children?

I w[illegible], said the One, known as Saviour
I am in you
and of you
we share the same breath
Exhiled to darkness
I journeyed into the deep howl of your pain
to resurrect the song in your voice
my bones were the woodpile I lay on
and my trapped senses were pledged to grief
until I sank in my own death
I too cried out to my Father for the anointing of holy dreams
and He kindled me with a wild and furious fire
I am your Genesis
I have gathered the ritual of your pain at Gethsemane's feet
and in the sacrament of my suffering
lies your salvation...

Barbara Mitchell

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Margaret Robertson
Program Secretary

Are You There?

Recently at a conference, one of the speakers cupped her hands around her mouth and called out, "Are you there? Sisters and brothers, from around the world, "Are you there? Do you hear our cries for Jubilee?"

At the time, her speech seemed rather ordinary. But in the weeks following, her one, well-placed action has called out again and again. At the time, conference participants responded by calling back and continued to respond in that manner throughout the conference - even in the airport afterwards as people recognized other conference participants.

- Logo of the Presbyterian Women USA

The speaker was Mercy Amba Oduyoye, Director of the Institute of Women in Religion and Culture at Trinity Theological College, Ghana. I have been aware of her strong theological presence for some time now. I have read some of her writings, and I saw her in action at the Decade Festival in Harare, November 1998. Mercy is a woman of faith, a woman with a strong voice and a woman of action. She calls each of us to read the scriptures, especially the words calling for Jubilee, and to respond to God's call.

The setting was the PC(USA) Presbyterian Women's Churchwide Gathering. Almost five thousand women and men gathered July 15-19 to *Sound the Trumpet! Proclaim Jubilee!*

The theme of the gathering was relevant for the year 2000 call for Jubilee. It is also relevant for The Presbyterian Church in Canada as we move into the 2000-01 mission study *Living as a Jubilee People.*

When we read about Jubilee in Leviticus 25, Isaiah 61 and Luke 4, we listen to the words, each in our own context. The texts call for release from bondage, redistribution of wealth and renewal of the earth. What does this mean in our own communities?

We can pay lip service to the requests. Or we can move to accountable action. Read Luke 4. Notice carefully how Jesus angers the listeners. They don't like his tone of voice. Their 'nice young man' has said something very harsh. He expects them to do more than pay lip service to the poor and oppressed.

They have missed the point. He raises his voice. When they don't respond he says, "Fine, I'll go somewhere else!" (Today that could be to the ghettos, barrios, AIDS/HIV centres, another church, another country....)

We understand Jesus' claims. But how can we understand them pro-

foundry and live them - as God's anointed ones?

When Mercy called to us, she was looking for more than a friendly reply. She was asking us to look seriously at our response to the call for Jubilee. What does it mean in our communities? What does it mean to the global community, to the world wide church of Jesus Christ? In the church's mission study this year, there is opportunity to respond through the themes of Jubilee- *change, forgiveness, justice, liberation, restoration and proclamation.*

Perhaps you could support a minister or missionary by listening intently to their story and keeping in touch by mail or email. Find out what their struggles and dreams are. Find out how the gospel informs their mission. Listen objectively. Do not impose your cultural norms on their ministry.

When you meet someone who is living in oppressive conditions, in poverty or abuse, believe their story. Do not say, "Well dear, it will get better". It may not get better. Ask them what they can do in their given situation. Encourage them to take healthy and helpful actions. Connect them with social agencies or cousellors who can help. Encourage them to seek out safe and hopeful solutions. Remember, you cannot make a decision for someone else. What can you suggest that will empower that person to live with their situation or move out of it? They must make the decision or take the action that they can live with.

Are you there? What is God calling you to do? Are you called to listen, to suggest, to pray, to write…?

Are you there? Can you respond to God's call for Jubilee - change, forgiveness, justice, liberation, restoration and/or proclamation?

- Canadian Presbyterians at the PC(USA) Presbyterian Women's Churchwide Gathering, back row left to right: Nadine Murray, Lillian Burgher, Sherma Mitchell, Julie Patterson, Barbara McLean, Margaret Robertson, Vernice Gumbs, Eleanor Scarlett, Judith Djan. Front row, left to right: Zahra Brown, Barbara Marshall, Mary Moorehead, Paulette Brown, Faith Patterson, Marjorie Ross.

Forward in Faith

Another summer has quickly slipped by. Committee executives are now into the new season. Before long the church year will be in full swing.

As the year slips by, the members of the Finance Working Group are interested in the state of our Budget, which was approved at $1,077,600 for the 2000.

To the end of August, which is the latest figure we have at this time, we have received $352,534 from the Presbyterials across the Church. This is almost $41,000 less than we had received at the same time last year.

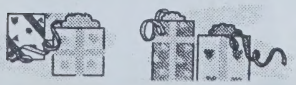
As one looks over the individual Presbyterial givings, it is surprising that two of our larger Presbyterials have not submitted any of the offering receipts for the first seven months of the year. It is encouraging to see that many of the others have done quite well.

While most of us take holidays during the summer months, we all are aware that bills continue to come in and have to be paid.

We trust that group treasurers will endeavour to forward their givings to the National Office regularly, and at least every two months, so that all givings for the year 2000 are received by January 10, 2001, the cut-off for this year. Last year a sizeable amount arrived late and could not be included in the receipts for the years in which they were given.

We do appreciate your continued support which enables the WMS to go "Forward in Faith" in its ministry within the Church. Our Lord is faithful; let us also be faithful as we seek to serve Him.

Giollo Kelly, Treasurer.



2000 years after Christ's birth, Bethlehem's shepherds are dwindling

By Ross Dunn, ENI

Shepherds' Field, near Bethlehem, 17 December, 1999 (ENI)--About 2000 years ago in fields near Bethlehem, angels were said to have told shepherds of the birth of Jesus. A few shepherds can still be found there today, wandering with their flocks across the sparsely covered grass slopes much as their predecessors did in biblical times, but their numbers are dwindling.

Most shepherds have given up the hard life and moved into modern homes adjoining the fields, where they work strictly on a part-time basis. Should the angels return, they would be likely to find many of the shepherds inside their homes next to an electric heater, watching television.

Only a few shepherds still watch their flocks by night, gazing up at the stars as their forefathers did, looking for good or bad omens and attempting to divine the future.

"Now technology has changed all that. People are less interested in the stars. I have radio, video, television and a satellite dish which picks up all 30 channels," Mr Elisa Banoura, 67, a Palestinian Christian, told ENI. "They supply me with all the weather reports and news I need."

He typifies the modern-day shepherd now living on the outskirts of Bethlehem. He keeps only seven animals - sheep and

goats - in a small room at the rear of his house, seldom letting them roam out of his backyard. He feeds them until they are ready to be slaughtered and sells them for about US$170 each.

The high cost of feedstuffs renders his vocation uneconomic, he says, making it a true labour of love to keep alive a family tradition dating back 500 years. Banoura, who is also a retired science teacher, is the last of a long line of shepherds. All of his children have decided to enter other professions, such as law and medicine, rather than to keep to family tradition.

Another shepherd, Ahmed Abyyiat, 60, a Muslim, was born and has
lived all his life in Beit Sahur, also known as the Shepherds' Field. A member of the Taamrah tribe, he has been wandering the hills around Bethlehem since the age of seven.

His bed is a raised steel platform in an open field. He spends his nights covered in wool blankets, next to the wooden enclosure of his flock. There is a small stone shelter nearby, to provide protection in case of rain.

Waking before sunrise, he opens the gate for the sheep and goats and begins searching for grazing areas. The vegetation is often sparse. For most of the year the hills are brown and barren in appearance, as they have been for centuries. But they have served as home and a life support system for Abyyiat and his forefathers, nomadic tribesmen.

He has about 100 sheep and some goats. All of them have names and they understand him when he calls out. "As we walk, I sing and recite poetry, in which I delight, although I have never learned to read or write," he said.

He started learning his profession at the age of seven from his father, who learned it from his father. "In my youth, one could stroll freely, without limits. You did not need anyone's permission or stop and think, 'Is this my land, or does it belong to someone else'," he said.

This was before 1967, when the West Bank was occupied by Israel. "This is sad for someone like me who is descended from a long line of shepherds, going back at least a century and probably even longer; I have always considered myself Palestinian," he said.

Most of the West Bank remains under Israeli military occupation but Bethlehem itself has been allowed limited Palestinian self-rule. Abyyiat noted that Jesus, who is recognised in the Koran as being of the holiest prophets, came from Bethlehem. But, he said: "I am a Muslim, and we have different beliefs about him. And no, I do not know the Christian story about his birth."

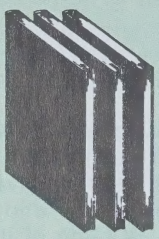
It was news to him that angels were meant to have appeared before the shepherds in biblical times to announce the coming of Jesus into the world.

"All those who can read and follow the Koran closely know that there were many miracles in the life of Jesus," he said. Ahmed devotes some time to prayer, but most hours are taken up with work.

"I am grateful that some of my sons help me in the fields but I know that not one of them will be a shepherd. The country is getting smaller and the food for the sheep more expensive. We are not making real profits any longer. I can see that we are a dying breed. In my area now there are only about 20 shepherds, so you can see how we are facing the threat of extinction."

Millennium Quilt Exhibit

February 8-28	St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Calgary, AB
March 9-26	Ormstown Presbyterian Church, Ormstown, ON
April 1-April 18	Hopedale Presbyterian Church, Oakville, ON
April 24-May 8	St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Barrie, ON
May 15-31	Gale Presbyterian Church Elmira, ON



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Family Countdown to Christmas, A Day by Day Celebration, illustrated by Viki Woodsworth G6574 $17.50

101 Things to Do For Christmas, illustrated by Louise Comfort G4343 $17.50

Both books written by Debbie Trafton O'Neal

Both these books are a celebration of families and Christmas with activities and projects for children and parents or grandparents to do together. **101 Things to Do for Christmas** is packed with gift and decorating ideas made from readily available materials, clearly illustrated in step-by-step stages.

Craft projects such as the "Paper Tube Nativity" and the "Candy Melt Wreaths" are fun as well as educating about Christmas tradition and the excitement of giving something handmade.

Family Countdown to Christmas is an activity book, sticker book and calendar beginning with December 1 and ending with January 6. Every page is filled with planning ideas such as how everyone can take part in the Christmas Card tradition. There are reflections such as whether we really need everything on our wish list, reflecting on our blessings, and all kinds of activities. Also included is information about the roots of traditions like lights on the tree, poinsettias and other Christmas symbols. Often people complain how commercial Christmas has become. These are books to reverse that and bring back the values we treasure.

Jotham's Journey, A Storybook for Advent by Arnold Ytreeide, Servant Publications G7609 $18.00

Ideal for families endeavouring to keep a Christ-centred Christmas, this well designed book has a portion of the story and a reflection for every day of Advent including Christmas day. This is an exciting story of a ten year old boy who gets separated from his family and crosses Israel in search of them. Encountering thieves and kidnappers, shepherds and wisemen, he has all kinds of adventures until at last he finds his way to the Saviour born in Bethlehem. Setting aside a few minutes each day and using an Advent wreath and candles is a wonderful way to balance December's commotion and stress with the reality of God in our lives and to start a rich tradition of the nativity celebration.

Presbyterians, a Spiritual Journey by Dirk Wierenga, Geneva Press G7495 $82.25

The author, a successful business man and baby boomer, dropped out of his church while he was in his teens. He returned later as an adult and found his faith renewed. He came back to a church that had declining membership for the last thirty years and now was experiencing an increase in numbers due in part to the fact that many of his generation had left and returned very much like himself.

This led to a curiosity of other's spiritual journeys and he decided to travel across the

United States and interview Presbyterians, discovering their life-changing stories of faith. Beautifully photographed and movingly told, through these stories we meet Presbyterians in every walk and phase of life and learn where they found the strength to take the courageous path. This would make an elegant and inspirational gift.

WMS Resources

1) There is a packet available (free) for anyone starting a **new WMS Group**. Order from The Book Room.

2) Have you noticed "Still Moving" - a new popular, glossy WMS report? Extra copies are available for anyone wanting to promote the work of WMS. Order from The Book Room (while quantities last).

3) **Stories of Mission:** Thanks to Ian MacCready we can now access **Stories of Mission** on line from the PCC Website. There are links from: WMS: www.presbyterian.ca/wms; from Canada Ministries: www.presbyterian.ca/canadaministries; from International Ministries: www.presbyterian.ca/international and Education for Mission: www.presbyterian.ca/mission. In previous years these have only been available in print form in the WMS Annual Report and in the Acts and Proceedings. They are still available in the A&P and in a separate report entitled **Stories of Mission**.

Seniors on the Go

Jesus' Birthday Cake (Scripture Cake) by Norma Tomlinson

A wonderful activity for adults and children alike. Learn scripture and share in buying the ingredients, mixing, baking and eating of Jesus' birthday cake. A new twist to an old favorite.

Enlarge the recipe below. Cut into individual sections the ingredients #s 1-12. Give each child/youth/adult in your group one section. Instruct them to find out what the ingredient is by reading the scripture passage and by purchasing the correct amount. Plan to have materials ready to bake and eat at your next meeting! It might be wise to ensure that everyone has the right ingredient beforehand. Versions of scripture will differ! (Answers are on p 36 just in case!)

Ingredients

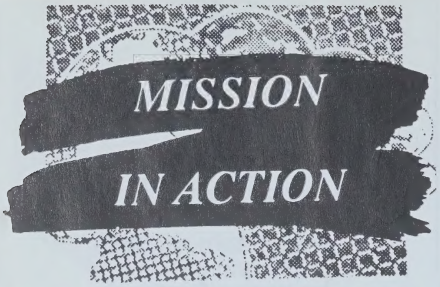
1. 1 cup Judges 5:25 (last clause)
2. 1 cup Jeremiah 6:20
3. 1 tbsp 1 Samuel 14:25
4. 3 of Jeremiah 17:11
5. 1 cup 1 Samuel 30:12
6. 1 cup Nahum 3:12 chopped
7. 2 oz Numbers 17:8, blanched and chopped
8. 2 cups 1 Kings 4:22
9. Season to taste with 2 Chronicles 9:9
10. Pinch of Leviticus 2:13 (last word)
11. 1 tsp Amos 4:5
12. 3 tbsp Judges 4:19

To Mix

Follow Solomon's prescription for disciplining a child, Proverbs 23:13, and you will have a good cake.

Beat #1-3 to a cream. Add #4 one at a time, still beating. Mix together #8-11 and add. Add #12. Bake in slow oven 275-300F, 1-1/2 hours.

Three generations of my family have used this activity successfully.



Margaret Vanderzweerde
Ratlam, India

May 2000 - I went to Ratlam, a mission station founded by the PCC and turned over in 1925 to the United Church. The Saturday that I traveled from Jobat to Ratlam the weather was over 42 degrees. The road was bad, the vehicle "shockless", and the heat unbearable. It has been so very dry in that area where already there is a water shortage. Along the road runs an 8 or 10 inch pipeline that delivers water to the villages. The people in these rural areas are so desperate for water that at six different locations they had broken the pipeline and were creating small ponds for the women to get water. The result? No water down the line, leading to riots and violence.

The government was delivering water in tanks, but the quantities, although large, are never sufficient to provide life's necessity to thousands of people. One wonders how the people are going to deal with the drought and all its related misery.

When I arrived at Ratlam I visited the hospital, the school, and the hostel. Sad to say, each of them is in such a poor state of disrepair that the hospital is not likely to remain open much longer. I am just glad to hear that the PWS&D Community Health program will start as soon as the funds are received. At least there will be a program of preventive medicine with, hopefully, some curative medicine associated with it.

From Ratlam I went to Indore where I visited the Indore Christian College, which was built by the PCC about 100 years ago. As most of the old mission buildings, this one, too, is in a sad state of disrepair.

Remember the mission work of the Church in your prayers.

Margaret

Barsoum Family
Nicosia, Cyprus

September 2000 - Greetings from Canada and Cyprus! This letter comes to you at the end of our three months furlough. We thank God for His presence and guidance throughout this time and we thank you for standing with us in prayer. We were led in the decisions that we had to make on issues related to the future of our family and ministry.

In June, we attended Philip's high school graduation at BFA in Germany and then traveled to Canada where we started to settle back into the family house, which became available, in Richmond Hill, just north of Toronto. It was wonderful to have the family back together again in the same place where our three childern were rasied.

In July, Philip's acceptance at Ryerson University was confirmed which means that he will be studying Computer Engineering in Toronto and at the place where Sherien is completeing her 3rd year in Journalism.

In consultation with SAT-7, Interserve, and our local and national church we decided that Mona and Christopher will stay in Canada for one year as Philip settles into

Toronto. During this period, Makram's work assignment will alternate two months overseas and one month in Canada. This will continue until September 2001. We thank God for this provision as we felt that our childern needed to be together again and close to us at this time.

During the summer we worked very hard to prepare the house to again become our dwelling place in Canada. This ranged from doing plumbing and painting jobs to finding furniture and house equipment. The children were excited and helped in many ways.

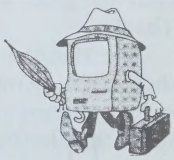
We were proud to see Sherien spend most of her summer directing a camp for street kids with Urban Promise, and Philip voluntered his time as a counsellor in the same ministry. Christopher had fun attending camp some days and traveling with Dad and Mom. Throughout the summer Makram remained connected to SAT-7 business in the Middle East via his electronic office but kept things to a minimum.

Our deputation schedule was quite busy and we were able to make about 60 calls to churches, organizations and friends. This included preaching, SAT-7 presentations, and many visits to individuals. We were grateful to be able to buy a 1989 Nissan, Sentra which took us everywhere with some minor repairs. Many churches have renewed their pledges of finanical and prayer support and others are challenged by the SAT-7 Ministry and its impact in the Middle East. On September 10th, Makram said goodbye to family members and friends and returned to Cyprus. Readjusting to SAT-7 work and team was quick since communication with HQ had been maintained during the summer.

Here are the items for praise and prayer which we all need to bring to Him:
The family during this transition year of partial separation; safety over the next twelve months especially with Makram's busy international travel schedule; Philip's university education and readjustment to life in Canada after four years away; Christopher's readjustment to Canada, friends and to North York Christian School in Toronto.

Makram, Mona, Sherien, Philip, &
Christopher

From: Sarah Hoag
Subject: Update on *Flames* Mission Tours



We had two very successful tours last Spring (to Eastern Europe and to Kenya & Malawi.) Four tours have been planned for FALL 2000: The Mozambique & Malawi tour is being re-scheduled to "after Easter 2001."

SPRING 2001
The India & Nepal tour, February 8 - March 4, led by Margaret & Jake Vanderzweerde, has a deadline of Friday, December 15, 2000. To date, we do not have enough people registered for it to go ahead. (Cost $4500.)

The Nicaragua & Costa Rica tour, March 12 - 22 (optional excursion to March 25th), led by Joe Reed, has a deadline of Friday, February 2, 2001. The minimum number for this tour has been reached, although we can still take more registrations. (Cost $2200.)

The Mozambique & Malawi tour, will be rescheduled, probably for April - May 2001
It focuses on Maputo and Tete, Mozambique and Northern Malawi. There are two spaces remaining. (Cost: $3800)

Richard & Ling Schwarz
Nepal

April 2000 - The sun is just starting to strike the 8,000 metre peaks of the Annapurnas to the north of our home. The sight never fails to amaze me even after four years in Nepal. The same sun, a few minutes later, will strike the crowded rooms of our neighbours, struggling to feed, clothe and educate their children, let alone such luxuries as a warm house or private transport.

I (Richard) have no problem finding things to keep me busy: still doing plenty of cleft lip and palate surgery as well as other plastic and general surgery. Many are from the very poor strata of society.

Shiva, a 12-year-old orphan, has been living on the street since running away from a group home. I did the first operation to get his fingers and wrist straight. He has to go through a lot of physiotherapy to get his hand working well, but he is happy with things already. The cost of all this is covered by gifts from Canadian Christians. Thanks.

The Maoist activities continue. Today is their first "Armed General Strike". We were wakened yesterday by a bomb going off at the electricity office. There has been almost one police officer a day killed since the beginning of the year. Pray for peace.

In His grace,
Richard, Ling, Jon, Daniel
&Christina

Heather Jones
Malawi

There is a new addition to my family. I call her Njuyu-Baby. That's because she came from Njuyu, an area about one and a half hours north west of here, mostly by dirt road. Njuyu-Baby is a chicken, and despite the somewhat amusing thought of owning my own chicken, her arrival was a serious and humbling experience.

But I should start at the beginning. When I was in Canada a few months ago, some individuals and some churches wanted to be more involved with the work here, so they made contributions to the church, asking me to use the money where I thought it was needed. Some of this money I turned over to the Synod, to be used for new church buildings. I know of many congregations trying to erect buildings for worship. The church here is growing so quickly that they can't begin to keep up with the need for meeting places.

The money was given out through the Synod, because they keep track of the churches that request assistance. My colleagues know much better than I do, where the money should go. A few weeks ago, Rev. Mumba, Clerk of the Presbytery of Njuyu came to visit me. He told me that a church in his Presbytery had been helped through this grant, and he invited me to see the church, and to meet the people.

It took a while to arrange a visit, but this week I finally made it to Kanyawayi Congregation. What a day it was! We picked up Rev. Mumba at the Presbytery Office. That, at least, had a marker on the road to help us find it. With Rev. Mumba in the car, we went back out the road, back over the bridge, to a track in the dirt. Although it was only a track, it was easy enough to drive on.

However, I got a bit worried when Rev. Mumba said "You will want to use another gear up ahead." I don't HAVE four-wheel drive on my car! "Well", he said, "then just keep going." So, I drove over a sandy patch that seemed to be a dried up riverbed. It wasn't too bad. I'll tell you about the

OVERSEAS STAFF BIRTHDAYS

NOVEMBER
5 - Ellen Rae Dai, China
7 - Joe Reed, Central America
11-Fernando Cascante, Costa Rica (USA)
16 - Richard Schwarz, Nepal
21 - Jack Geddes, Taiwan
21 - Marlene Buwalda, Taiwan

DECEMBER
1 - Heather Jones, Malawi
15 - Rick Allen, Kenya
24 - Agwu David Onuoha, Nigeria
31 - Jack McIntosh, Japan

JANUARY
13 - Caleb Lessard-Clouston, Japan
16 - Beth McIntosh, Japan

return trip later.

As the car pulled up to the site of the church, people began to gather around the car. They escorted us into church, where more people were already seated on a bench, or a log, or a mat, each of which were spread across the front of the church. In front of this area, were chairs, clearly intended for we who were visiting.

We took our seats and Rev. Mumba said "They will want to greet you." This is typical, I thought. It is like being introduced at church. Anyone who visits, or who comes to a church for the first time, is called to the front, introduced, and 'greets' the congregation (says "Good morning).

I prepared myself to stand, and nodded to Rev. Mumba that I understood. But I didn't understand. As I nodded, Rev. Mumba turned to the congregation and motioned them to come forward. It was like a receiving line, only not so organized. I had to shake hands with everyone who had come, men women and children. Everyone returned to their seats, and Rev. Mumba proceeded to introduce them, one by one, telling me their name, their role in the church, and in some cases explaining the family relationships among them. In typical Malawian style, people continued to arrive throughout the speeches that were made over the next 45 minutes. In between each speech, those who had arrived were introduced, and came to shake my hand.

The speeches were repetitious, but so sincere I could not be bored. Representatives from the Session, the Women's Guild, the Vestry, the community, and the Village Headmen all spoke. Time and again, people rose to express thanks to God and to me for the help that their church had received from Canadians.

We 'toured' the new facility and Mr. Nyasulu, the building supervisor explained the work that has been done. It was in 1998 that they dug the foundation and began to mold bricks. It would have been then that they approached the Synod, asking for help with their building project. But having asked for help, they did not sit and wait for it to arrive. When I say that 'they' 'dug' the foundation, that is exactly what I mean. There is no construction equipment here. The foundation was dug with pick ax and shovels, by members of the congregation.

The bricks were shaped by hand, and fired in 'ovens' built for the purpose. The fuel for these ovens was gathered and chopped from the wood cleared from the building site. The mortar was made from mud and sand and gravel collected from the old riverbed. The supervisor explained that because the roof was not ready to go on, they had to buy some cement to 'cap' the tops of the walls.

Last year, the walls were completed. This year, they began buying and transporting planks for the rafters. Many of these were carried in traditional Malawian style (on the heads of women) as they walked great distances from the lumber mill to the church site. Scrimping from their meagre incomes, they purchased the nails needed to put the rafters together. As they worked, they prayed for the iron sheets needed for

the roof. One member of the local community, not a church member, donated a first lot of iron sheets. This donation covered about 10 feet of the main part of the building.

The iron sheets purchased with Canadian money cover most of the rest of the main part of the building.

When I saw the church, the roof covered between one-half and two-thirds of the building. The members of the congregation continue to pray that their church will be built to the glory of God. And they continue to work, very hard, to collect the materials that are needed. To see them gathered to give thanks for part of a roof, to hear them express their appreciation for a modest gift from Canada, to be with them in their new church, was an inspiring experience.

After the speeches, the tour, and the further speeches, I was told that the women wanted to dance. Would I join them? Of course! And so we sang and danced, giving praise to God and experiencing the joy of Christian fellowship. It was a wonderful way to finish, I thought.

However, you haven't heard about Njuyu-Baby yet! We weren't finished. I was taken over to the house of one of the members, where they brought out tea and buns. We gave thanks and shared the simple meal, and I was grateful for the hospitality. They were so thoughtful, wanting us to be refreshed for the journey home. As the tea things were cleared, I began to offer thanks, and to bid farewell, but I was cut short. The woman who had been clearing had reappeared, this time bearing a tray full of food. In this poor community, where the struggle to eat is a daily challenge, we feasted on nsima, and rice, and chicken.

As we finished that meal, I wondered how to express my thanks. These people had given so generously. It was such a pleasure to be together. As the plates were cleared away, I was trying to plan what I would say. That's when Njuyu-Baby entered the room. I had heard stories from friends of mine who had been presented with live chickens as a gift. I turned to Rev. Mumba, and I asked "What's happening?" "They just want to give you a gift," he explained.

I was overwhelmed. The chicken, and a large bag of groundnuts were passed over to me. "We wanted to give you more, but this is all we have today."

It was more than enough. It was too much. When I realize how easy it is for me to give a few dollars, and what a sacrifice it is, for these people to give their food, I am humbled and inspired.

I give thanks to God for their generosity of spirit, and for their faithful witness. I pray that I may give as selflessly as they do.

Heather

Lessard-Clouston Japan

August 2000 - Greetings from your missionaries in Japan! Since we returned to our life and work at Kwansei Gakuin University late last year much has happened. Unfortunately, in many ways these months have perhaps been our most difficult in Japan, and we have been unsure of what to write to you. We do, however, value your prayers and partnership with us, and we therefore want to update you and ask again for your continued prayer support.

Returning to Nishinomiya at the end of December was quite heartening. On the positive side, we felt very much encouraged as we were warmly and repeatedly welcomed back (after six months home assignment in Canada) by our English Bible

study group, various acquaintances, and many folks in the neighbourhood and at local shops we frequent.

On the negative side, Joel had a difficult time readjusting to his kindergarten, and it was mid-February before things settled down somewhat. Thus we happily report that Joel did eventually remember his Japanese and graduated with his classmates from kindergarten in March. At the end of March our family took a trip to Nagasaki to attend a missionary conference, where we found learning about the persecution of early Christians and missionaries there very sobering.

Joel had a very successful semester through the end of July, making some friends and doing very well with his studies. Joel's school day officially starts when (with his heavy leather backpack) he meets his local walking group about 7:50 each morning and ends when he gets home between 2:30 and 3:30 most afternoons, ready for a snack and the homework he inevitably brings with him. Thankfully, Joel has a good teacher, and a number of children we know from his kindergarten are in the same school, so we have been able to find some help (and even a bit in English) among our contacts.

April is also the beginning of the university year, and Michael was happy to get back to his routine and various classes (including English composition, conversation, and listening, plus Canadian studies.) One down side of being away is that I was added to more committees during our absence, so I am doing more administration than I would prefer. English chapel on Thursday mornings continues to be well attended and provides good feedback from students. In May I was blessed as I attended the western Japan men's prayer summit once again, but I was also chosen as a member of its servant leader team.

Unfortunately a dark cloud was over us here in February through late May, and it has affected many of our personal and professional relationships. Without going into details, another missionary at the university was charged with sexual harassment late last year, and in the winter and spring a very secretive and problematic investigation supposedly took place.

Ours has never been a close missionary community, but whatever trust or fellowship we had previously has been more of less shattered. Though he denied the allegations completely, the missionary was forced to resign.

In addition to this situation, another missionary had to return to Switzerland in March because of his missions' financial difficulties, and the missionary to the high school attached to the university, who is our next door neighbour, is leaving in December. We are thus a community in transition, with our share of challenges.

During the above situation, we could echo Habakkuk 1:3, "Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrong? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife and conflict abounds." At the men's prayer summit God reminded Michael through Habakkuk 1:5 that He is still active and very much in control: "Look at the nations and watch — and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told." As Habakkuk 2:3 notes, though, we await God's revelation in His time.

We should note that a number of positive things have also happened in our lives and ministry. In February Michael preached his first sermon in Japanese, on "Jesus and Children", at our church's middle and high school worship service. Our English Bible study group is always in transition, but one encouraging thing is that a few people from the church have begun to attend again. This means that we are not the only Christians

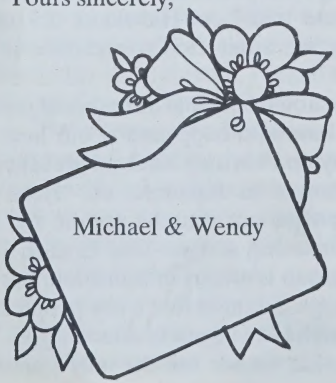
there, and as we continue to study Luke the students who come will get a Christian perspective from some Japanese people, too.

Wendy has been getting to know many children and families in the neighbourhood, and in response to interest from various people this spring she began an English Bible study for some mothers in the area. This will replace my former English discussion group for students. After some initial challenges in getting started, I am excited about the relationships and opportunities this will provide. One of the participants is a Christian, but the others are women interested in learning about the Bible, but with very limited previous knowledge. In addition, I was asked to take over a weekly English conversation class for a group of women that wants to study with a Christian teacher, beginning in September.

Given the stress we've hinted at and the various activities noted above, we know that we can only face the future here with God's guidance and protection and your faithful prayer support. The autumn is a very busy period at the university, but Michael would like to find more time to work on his dissertation research. School for Joel will become more complicated as he begins learning kanji (Chinese characters) this fall.

May "mercy, peace and love be yours in abundance" (Jude 2).

Yours sincerely,



Scripture Cake Ingredients
1. butter 2. sugar 3. honey 4. eggs 5. raisins 6. figs 7. almonds 8. flour 9. 1 tsp cinnamon, 1/2 tsp nutmeg, 1/2 tsp cloves 10. salt 11. baking powder 12. milk

PRAYER REQUESTS:

India/Nepal
1. that the Lord will provide His wisdom and direction for the ministry of the Schwarz family in the next term as they return to Nepal in the fall.
2. for orphans everywhere.
3. for the ministry and witness of the churches in India and Nepal.

Japan
1. for Joel's continued adjustment to school and language.
2. for focus and uninterrupted work on Michael's thesis.
3. that Japan's economy continue to inch forward after years of recession.
4. that Japanese Christians may live by faith but not neglect justice, mercy and faithfulness.

Cyprus/Canada
1. for the Barsoum family during this transition year of partial separation.
2. for safety over the next twelve months espcially with Makram's busy international travel schedule.
3. for the children's readjustment to life in Canada.

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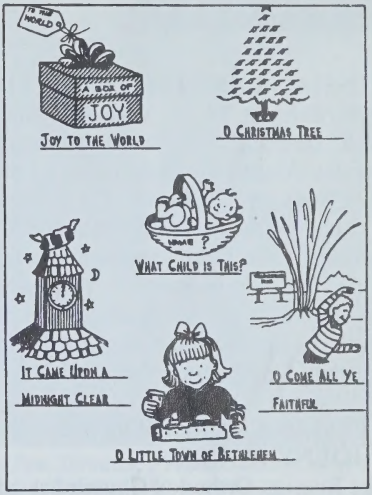
Solution to puzzle on page 15.


JOY
JOY TO THE WORLD
O CHRISTMAS TREE
WHAT CHILD IS THIS?
IT CAME UPON A MIDNIGHT CLEAR
O COME ALL YE FAITHFUL
O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

Working together for a brighter tommorrow

It may not seem like much, but this 20' x 15' rectangle of murky water is hope for these women in southern Malawi. This fish pond--built with weeks of hard labour--is filled with fishlings purchased with a loan from PWS&D's partner: the Naming'azi Farm. When the women pay back the loan, with the procceds from the fish, another community can begin their own pond.

Presbyterian World Service & Development

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NEWS

RUSSIA'S LAST TSAR SAINTED

Tsar Nicholas 11, his wife Alexandra and their five children were canonized on Sunday August 20, in Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Saviour. The Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church canonized the family under a special category, "passion-bearers" in recognition of the humility with which they accepted death rather than the way in which the imperial family ruled Russia.

RUSSIAN CHURCH SPEAKS ON THORNY ISSUES

The Russian Orthodox Church has adopted policies on some contemporary issues in an effort to shift the church's priorities to education and mission.

The church criticized cloning as "an undoubted challenge to the very nature of man" who is "the image of God". Reproductive technologies such as in vitro fertilization are described as unacceptable - except for artificial insemination between a married couple.

In some cases, such as the condemnation of homosexuality and abortion, the document reaffirms the church's biblical and canonical teaching. The Orthodox position is sometimes similar to Roman Catholic teaching which also rejects abortion and euthanasia. While the Vatican rejects contraception in all artificial forms, the Russian church's document states that, although contraception should be discouraged, some forms of contraception, which prevent fertilization, should not be "equated with abortion".

On political matters, the text praises "active patriotism", but condemns "aggressive nationalism" which turns the state into a god.

ANGLICANS CUT STAFF

Faced with more than 350 lawsuits over alleged physical and sexual abuse at church-run schools, the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC) made significant cuts to budgets and staff.

Eight full-time national office positions were cut and grants to northern Canada and overseas ministries were reduced by $500,000. The ACC's support of national ecumenical coalitions and the size of the Anglican Journal, have been reduced. Despite the budget cuts, financial support for indigenous ministries is being doubled to C$547,000 a year.

GERMAN BISHOPS AGREE TO PAY

The Roman Catholic Church in Germany has agreed to pay five million Deutschmarks (US$2.35 million) to forced labourers who were brought to Germany from abroad during the Second World War and worked in Catholic institutions. The decision announced in a statement issued on 29 August acknowledged that it had used forced labourers during the war.

In July the Evangelical Church, Germany's main Protestant body, announced that it would contribute 10 million Deutschmarks to a fund recently set up by the German government and businesses to compensate forced labourers, admitting that some of millions of forced labourers had been used by church organizations.

MANDELA RECEIVES PEACE AWARD

Nelson Mandela, former president of South Africa, has won the 2000 World Methodist Peace Award. Bishop Dandala, who announced the award described Mandela as "an icon of inspiration and hope for the people of South Africa, Africa and the world. He prevented South Africa from degenerating into a cauldron of violence and war".

NORTH KOREAN HEADS US CHURCH

The Presbyterian Church (USA) has elected a Korean-American, Syngman Rhee, as its moderator. Rhee was elected on 24 June by the church's 212th general assembly. For the first time in the church's history there was no white, male candidate.

Rhee, aged 69, was elected 50 years to the day after he fled North Korea as the Korean War broke out. He is professor of mission and evangelism and director of the Asian American Ministry and Mission Center at Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Virginia.

ETHIOPIAN ASSESSMENT MISSION

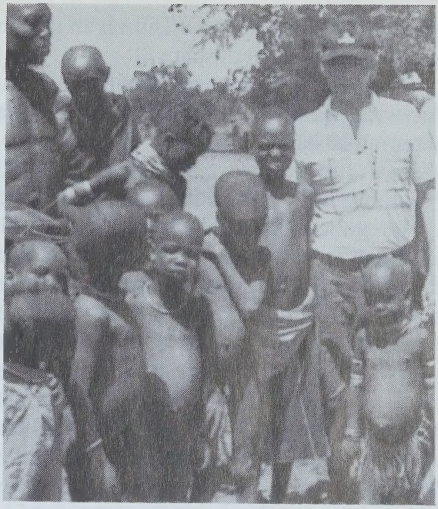
Rick Fee, Presbyterian World Service & Development, participated in a field visit to parts of Ethiopia in June, 2000. PWS&D is a member of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, which organized the trip and which has shipped more food to Ethiopia than any other country.

About 85% of Ethiopia's 60 million population is rural based. This makes Ethiopia highly dependent on its domestic agricultural production, which in turn is entirely dependent on favorable climatic conditions. The current food shortages are caused by the lack of rain. Some areas have not had rain for three years.

Official estimates are that from 8-10 million people are affected by the drought. The drought is most severe in the pastoral areas in the south and east where the first effect is on the livestock.

While war in the area did not cause the drought, it has compounded its effects. Trucks and buses are diverted to the war effort; higher livestock prices persist as the government buys livestock to feed its troops.

The humanitarian situation inside Eritrea is critical. There are reports of 750,000 internally displaced people.



- Rick Fee, Director, PWS&D, above, with famine victims.

Eritrea, in a continuing conflict with Ethiopia over its borders, is facing the greatest humanitarian crisis in the region.

The participants had extensive discussions with the Canadian embassy officials, noting that the Canadian government's role as an international food assistance donor has shifted in recent years from being a significant donor to providing less assistance.

While studies show that Ethiopia has the physical resources to feed itself, the reality is another matter. The government has a policy that 80% of all food assistance must be used as Food for Work as a move towards sustainability and self-reliance, however these programs are often directed to marginalized communities with few assets to begin with. The mission recommended that the food situation in Ethiopia should continue to be monitored in the event the next rains (August/September) fail.

WORLD'S REFORMED CHURCHES CELEBRATE 125 YEARS

The World Alliance of Reformed Churches celebrated its 125th anniversary on 21 July

at St Mark's Cathedral (Church of South India) in Bangalore, India.

Five delegates, representing Africa, America, Asia, Australia and Europe, lit a ceremonial lamp at the start of the service. WARC represents more than 200 Presbyterian, Reformed, United and Congregational churches around the world. In WARC's recent history, the most notable feature, according to past president Jane Dempsey Douglass, was "the shift of focus" to the South in the 1980s. Douglass told ENI that a milestone in this shift was the strong stand WARC took against apartheid during its general council in Ottawa. Two white churches in South Africa had been expelled from WARC for supporting apartheid as a result of "this awakening" by the general council.

TIMOTHY NJOYA WINS AWARD

Kenyan human rights activist Rev. Timothy Njoya has been selected as this year's John Humphrey Freedom Award recipient for his efforts to strengthen human rights and the democratic process in Kenya.

The Award, given each year by Rights & Democracy (International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development) includes a $25,000 grant and a speaking tour of Canada, and is named in honour of John Peters Humphrey, the Canadian who prepared the first draft of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It will be presented in Montreal on December 10, 2000, International Human Rights Day.

From the pulpit to the streets, Rev. Njoya has been calling for freedom from the political dictatorship in Kenya for almost two decades. This Presbyterian minister is also a very enthusiastic supporter of women's human rights. With Njoya in the lead, the church has emerged as one of the few institutions willing to challenge Kenya's government under President Daniel Arap Moi. Njoya's fearlessness and outspokenness have led Kenyan authorities to accuse him of subversion.

MODERATOR'S WIFE VISITS WOMEN'S SOCIETY

Dr. Elizabeth (Liz) Cairns took time from her own busy schedule as a full-time general practitioner in Dumbarton, Scotland to travel to Canada with her husband. The Rt. Rev. John Ballantyne Cairns is outgoing moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. Liz is active in the Women's Guild and a member of Soroptimists International, having served as president of the local branches of both organizations.

While visiting with her husband at the national offices of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, Dr. Cairns chatted with staff of the Women's Missionary Society. Liz is shown below (centre) with Katherine Allen, Glad Tidings Circulation Manager (right) and Margaret Robertson, Program Secretary.

MISSION STUDY NEWS

WAR ON MALARIA COSTS MILLIONS

Malawi spends at least US$2.7 million annually treating victims of malaria, which remains one of the country's main health delivery concerns.

A health ministry official reported that

malaria continues to occur with at least eight million cases recorded annually in the country of about nine million people. According to the reports, on average individual Malawians spend at least US$35 every year on malaria treatment in a country where per capita income is below US$200 annually.

The official added that at least 40 percent of all deaths of children under the age of two are as a result of malaria. "However, statistics show that there has been a 63 percent decrease in infant deaths from malaria since the introduction of insecticide-treated mosquito nets," said the official.

Note: The 2000-2001 Learning/Sharing study materials for children and youth are aimed at raising money for insecticide-treated malaria nets.

US-CUBA RELATIONS CHALLENGED (By Cheryl Heckler-Feltz)

New York, 12 September (ENI)--During an unprecedented visit by US ecumenical leaders to Cuba from 2 to 7 September, the head of the National Council of the Churches (NCCCUSA) called on US President Bill Clinton to end 40 years of economic sanctions against Havana and challenged Americans to reconsider their image of Cubans as "godless Communists" who blindly follow Fidel Castro.

Dr Bob Edgar, who created a strong tie between the NCC and the Cuban Council of Churches (CCC) earlier this year by campaigning for six-year-old Elian Gonzales to be returned to Cuba, also drew attention to the growth of Christianity in Cuba and pointed to medical and educational needs there.

In an interview with ENI the day after his return to NCC headquarters in New York, Edgar said the two greatest achievements of the trip included "bringing to full circle the drama around Elian" and building a new NCC-CCC protocol designed to improve the relationship between Christians in Cuba and the US.

"One of the most rewarding moments was hearing Juan Miguel [Elian's father] say how delighted he was to simply be able to take Elian to school on his bike in the morning," Edgar said.

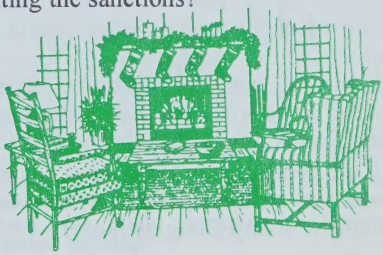
Edgar said the eight-member NCC delegation distributed 1500 educational packages at schools throughout Cuba, including the school in Cardenas where Elian is a pupil.

The new protocol with the CCC would encourage churches throughout the US to send members to Cuba to witness for themselves the significant growth of the Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, United Methodist, Pentecostal and Baptist denominations.

Edgar said the most difficult part of the trip was touring Old Havana where doctors in one clinic had to use an X-ray machine that was more than 50 years old. "Visiting the medical clinics and schools, it was hard seeing how these people, strongly committed to quality care and education, are so limited by resources," he said.

The US economic sanctions were a "devastating force" against the citizens of Cuba, he said. During a press conference in Havana, Edgar challenged President Clinton to end the sanctions.

"Why is it we've had these sanctions in place for 40 years, and Fidel Castro is stronger than ever?" Edgar asked. "If America wants to address what's really going on inside Cuba, aren't we better off by lifting the sanctions?"



IN THE SOCIETY

PRESBYTERIAL

Edmonton Peace River Presbyterial met at First Church June 24, the theme *Past, Present and Future of the WMS.*

There was an interesting display of Glad Tidings (going way back), Bibles and various other articles from the Archives of First Church (the first Presbyterian Church built in Edmonton).

Three generations from groups in the area, took part in the program, giving the history of the WMS in this area.

Everyone was invited to walk over to Mackay School, two blocks from the Church, where some of the first WMS meetings were held. Those making the walk carried a coloured balloon. Following the taking of a photograph, the brightly coloured balloons were released as a symbol of hope for the future of WMS.

Members of **Westminster** Presbyterial met at Kerrisdale Church, Vancouver, June 3, for their annual Friendship Tea. Barbara Marshall, President, greeted everyone. Following lunch Sheila Jakus reported on the Annual Council Meeting.

Members were asked to share something historical about their group. Rose Lum of the English-speaking Chinese WMS, told of the growth of their Society. Molly Doka of St. John's, White Rock mentioned the scrapbook she had kept during the last 25 years which was on display with other History scrapbooks and photo albums.

Morna Jeatt, Past Historian, had prepared an informative timeline listing dates and events of significance from the 1890s to the present. Kay Berry read a poem she wrote as a theme song for the Women's Camp at Camp Douglas June 12-15.

Greetings and prayer by Betty Siverns, Synodical President brought this time to a close.

The fourth annual Summer Outing of **Kingston** Presbyterial was held June 13 at St. Paul's, Amherst Island, a charming, old stone church built in 1883.

As we arrived out of the mist and rain, we were warmly welcomed by their President, Beth Forrester of the PCW group, and other members. A fun workshop was led by Judy MacLeod, new President of Kingston Presbyterial.

With the 103rd Psalm as our reference, we formed groups according to our personalities and talents, and put together a worship service including prayers, a singing quartet, a poster to illustrate the psalm, spiritual meditations, an amusing skit and a closing litany.

After a brown bag lunch, a short meeting was held. Most enlightening were the ingenious ways the various churches celebrated "Mission Awareness Sunday" on April 30.

As we departed for the ferry we viewed the beautiful, just completed, large wall hanging of The Last Supper hooked by Elaine Wolfreys. This work of art and love which took eight months to complete was given to St. Paul's by Marian Glenn in memory of her husband Marshall, a former church elder.

- Some of the Executive of Kingston Presbyterial and Annual Meeting speaker: left to right - Marion Conchie, Bev Adams, Heather Fear, Lynda Reid, Lyla Page, Mary Stout, Doreen Dath.

Executive Officers of **Bruce-Grey** Presbyterial met in Knox, Walkerton on June 15 to plan the Fall Rally to be held in Knox, Tiverton on September 28. Following the opening prayer, President Kay Remus, Walkerton, welcomed new officers.

The planned theme for the Rally FLAMING into the Future reflects the vision of the WMS, affirms our connections in the Presbyterian Church in Canada, and embraces guest speaker, Rev. Maria Papp.

Five kits will be sent to "Sleeping Children Around the World".

The Spring Rally of **Peterborough** Presbyterial was held at Old St. Andrew's, Colborne on May 17. The theme was *Mission 2000 Encourage One Another* (Isaiah 41:6).

A gathering singalong was led by Rev. Ruth Draffin, accompanied by organist Bev Denny. Worship based on Isaiah 41:1-10 was conducted by Jean Coull, followed with prayer by Kass Whitefield.

Bev Draffin, minister of Old St. Andrew's Colborne-Brighton Churches brought greetings, and Joan Smith Presbyterial President, welcomed everyone. Alwyn Horscroft of Colborne sang a solo.

Two dramatizations were given by members from Port Hope and Bowmanville.

Guest speaker Phyliss Symons of Port Hope showed slides on a "Visit to Cuba". Joan Lucas of St. Paul's, Peterborough, presented new WMS resources.

Glengarry Presbyterial Spring Rally was held May 25 at St. Andrew's, Avonmore. President Margaret Ferguson and Rev. Marc Bourgon, minister of St. Andrew's welcomed everyone.

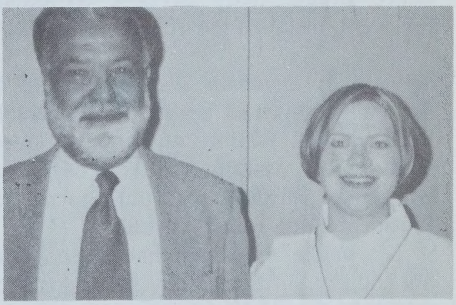
A Devotional Worship service was led by Finch WMS and a Memorial service was led by Lancaster WMS. Following business, Helen Stewart, long-time member, past president and now honorary president of Glengarry Presbyterial, and Eleanor MacLean of Finch, a faithful and active member for many years, and the new president of Quebec and Eastern Ontario Synodical Druse Bryan were welcomed.

Following lunch, guest speakers Rev. Bert and Marilyn DeBruijn presented a combined video/slide presentation of their tour of India. They were dressed in Indian costumes with Mr. DeBruijn coordinating the video/slides and Mrs. DeBruijn giving a lively narrative.

Rejoicing in Service was the theme for the Spring Rally of **Maitland** Presbyterial held in Lucknow Church, May 15. Following supper the evening program began with a lively singalong led by Norma and Marian Raynard. Presbyterial President Shirley McCall and Rev. Peggy Kinsman welcomed us. Worship and business followed.

Lindsey Raymond shared special music on the flute. Honorary memberships were presented to Muriel Neilson and Margaret Underwood by Gorrie WMS.

Agnes Bregman introduced guest speaker, Dr. Clarence McMullen. Born in India, Dr. McMullen was educated in India and Canada. He is married to Catherine, a Canadian nurse, and they have a grown family. For the past 30 years he has served as Director of the Christian Institute of



- Dr. Clarence McMullen, above left, with Heidi Wehrmann, Youth Director at St. Andrew's, Windsor, was guest preacher on Mission Awareness Sunday.

College has over 1200 students, mostly Sikhs and Hindus with about 12 percent Christian.

Dr. McMullen has taught sociology and helped with the college administration. His work includes research in the religious situation in the Punjab, promoting inter-faith dialogue and challenging Christians to understand their faith better in order to share it more fully with others.

The 84th Annual Meeting of **Kamloops** Presbyterial was held at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Retreat Centre, Cache Creek, BC May 29-30. Gwen Gamble, President welcomed delegates. Janet Tremblay and Wayne Stretch, Synod Staff led devotions and joyful singing using the New Book of Praise.

The theme was *Beyond Ourselves, Broaden our Horizons*. Speaker, Rev. Dr. Ted Siverns, challenged and inspired us with serious thoughts and humour. His three presentations were the focus of our meeting.

At the business meeting the offering was dedicated to be used for bicycles for overseas mission, dubbed the "faster pastor project".

The retreat closed with a Communion Service in the beautiful chapel with elders Eileen Paul and Iris Orton assisting Dr. Siverns. The In Memoriam was led by Grace Bragg. Betty Siverns, Synodical President, installed the officers for 2001.

Mission in Myanmar was the theme of **Sarnia** Presbyterial Spring Rally held in St. Andrew's, Watford on May 30. Guest speaker, Rev. Mathipi Vanhei of Myanmar (formerly Burma) was introduced by President Anna Jean McCoskery.

Mr. Vanhei explained that the people in his country suffered many hardships such as a lack of good drinking water, scant rainfall for crops, scarcity of nutritious foods, inadequate health standards, few methods of transportation and no religious freedom. A special offering was taken to assist with mission projects in Myanmar through PWS&D.

Music by Joan Plant and the Geerts Family was enjoyed.

Margaret McNeil and Marion Perrie presented highlights of the Synodical meeting in Chatham.

Closing devotions entitled "Mission" were taken by the Watford Group including Catherine Watson, Margaret McNeil, Dorothy Johnson and Helen Clark.

Lindsay Presbyterial met at St. John's, Cresswell, May 24. Following a singalong led by Grace Jess, President Linda Grace constituted the meeting. Beaverton members presented the worship service on the theme *Mission*, Acts 1:7-8 and Romans 12:2-19.

Reports were given, followed by announcements and prayer requests. After dinner, St. John's, Cresswell choir sang.

Guest speaker Tim Geissberger related his experiences during his four months in Kenya as an accountant in the office of Wycliffe bible translators.

Members of **Lanark and Renfrew** Presbyterial WMS groups held a rally on June 12 in Renfrew Church. Florence Nesbitt presided over the sessions. Eunice Schrader of Perth led the hymn sing.

Renfrew women conducted devotions on the theme with Chris Edgar accompanying the hymns. A report on the Annual Council Meeting was presented by Lottie Sutherland.

Rev. Patricia Van Gelder of Cobden led Bible Study on Psalm 150.

After lunch, Colleen Smith, who travels with Youth in Mission groups, told of experiences in Romania, Nicaragua, Malawi, and the Mistawasis Indian Reserve in Saskatchewan. The youth take part in varied projects - building, repairing, painting

and Sunday school.

Mary Nichol of Smiths Falls, who spent years in India and Nepal as a missionary nurse was presented with a bouquet after describing her initial trip by ship in 1947, one month en route from San Francisco.

ANNIVERSARY SURPRISE

On June 6 the **Grace Bethany** WMS Group of **Grace, Calgary** celebrated the approximate 50th anniversary of its name with a special food fellowship. The event was an elaborate hoax, concocted by our two ingenious presidents, Margaret Anderson and Elizabeth Young. Claiming to celebrate a golden anniversary, alumni members and daughters of current members were invited to attend. The meal was loosely based on Cuban cuisine and finished with a birthday cake.

The real reason for celebration was the opportunity to present Maureen McNerney with an Honorary Life Membership pin and certificate. Maureen was surprised and thrilled to find the focus of the evening shift to spotlight her years of dedicated service. Mollie Harback, another long time member of the WMS graciously passed her pin to Maureen.

The presentation was enhanced by Margaret Brooker, who told of Maureen's quiet strength and leadership which has inspired and enriched many women over the years.

- Above left - Maureen McNerney with Mollie Harback, Grace Bethany, Calgary.

CIRCULATION NEWS

Katherine Allen
Circulation Manager

Have you renewed your Glad Tidings subscription? Did you check your address to make sure it is accurate? Has your group returned the Glad Tidings subscription list to the office? It is helpful to receive the lists by November 1 to ensure that the changes/deletions/additions are done for the January/February issue. It also saves us time and money in not having to follow up later.

When transferring your subscription to another group/congregation, please notify the previous and the new Glad Tidings Secretary that you have transferred. They will require the number from the label on your magazine to record on the subscription list.

If the secretary has already sent in the list, then she can forward this information as well as the name and group number of the congregation you are now attending directly to the Glad Tidings Circulation Department. This will make it easier for us to find your subscription and prevent any duplication.

If you are not on a congregational list, send the information directly to the Glad Tidings office. Please include the label from a recent Glad Tidings magazine when corresponding.

Do you have promotional ideas you might like to share with others? Please send them to the Glad Tidings office. See the last issue for ways you can promote the magazine within the congregation.

LOCAL

The WMS of **Strathcona** Church, Edmonton, met for a luncheon meeting on May 15 to honour Shirley Johnston, Church secretary, and a valued member of the WMS group. Shirley and her family are moving to Houston, Texas.

Following lunch, President Margaret Moar, reminded us that Shirley had served in offices on Presbyterial and Synodical. Maryan Thendryle presented Shirley with a wild rose suncatcher to remind her of Alberta.

On June 16 the WMS of **Trinity Church**, Victoria, BC enjoyed a sandwich potluck at the home of their minister and his wife, Brian and Elizabeth Crosby.

A Life Membership pin was presented to Norma Kincaid, above right, who retired this year from the position as treasurer, having held the post for 22 years.

Helen Currie, above left, who has been an active member for 25 years was presented with a picture, a memento of the West Coast. Helen is returning to Edmonton where she was born, to be close to her family.

Our membership is now 21 and we are a happy and hard working group of Christian Women.

MISSION AWARENESS SUNDAY
April 30, 2000

Knox, Dundas had as special guest speaker, Rev. Dr. John A. Johnston whose sermon topic was "You are my Friends (John 15:14). Mary Warren took the children's story and the accompanying hymn was the Magic Penny Song, about the fact that when you give love away you end up with more of it! Pennies and other coins were collected to help put the roof on the new church in Kenya. The Magic Penny project is in response to the *FLAMES* focus on Missions and Children and Youth.

- Members of the Margaret Pirie and Sarah Dunning Auxiliary and children of the congregation at Knox, Dundas.

Members of the Margaret Pirie and Sarah Dunning Auxiliary, WMS, took an active part in the service. Some were in costume - Scottish, African, Indian and Oriental. Copies of the Glad Tidings were included in the bulletin. Artifacts from the National Presbyterian Museum, courtesy of Dr. Johnston, were on display in the Gym.

Snaps from Mission Awareness Sunday: Top right: Charlotte Brown, (third from right), guest speaker at **Tolmie Memorial, Port Elgin and Knox, Bourgoyne,** with WMS women. Both groups joined together for lunch at Tolmie.

Centre right: Margaret Robertson, guest speaker at **Central Church, Brantford** February 27, 2000 with WMS women. Below right: Margaret Ramsay, right, and Gloria Wasacase.

Below: Isabel Taylor WMS of **Chalmers Church, Calgary**, AB on Mission Awareness Sunday, and their 40th Anniversary. Women are holding their framed life memberships and a display of information over the past 40 years.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Vera Baker
Calvin, Abbotsford, BC

Margaret (Ivan) Fenwick
Hazel (Donald) McEachern
St. Andrew's, Allenford, ON

Marian Raynor
Carol Tosh
Riemke Vandermeer
Almonte, ON

Helen Webb
Essa Road, Barrie, ON

Miss Irene Muir
St. Andrew's, Belleville, ON

Mrs. Jas (Marguerite) Horton
Knox, Goderich, ON

Mrs. Gwen Gray
Guthrie, ON

Mrs. Mrs. E. MacLean
Knox, Kincardine, ON

Mrs. Pearl Clark
Margaret Rodger Memorial,
Lachute, QB

Miss Eva Chisholm
Knox, Milton, ON

Mrs. Leona Harrison
St. Andrew's, Oro Station, ON

Miss Eva Chisholm
Knox, Milton, ON

Mrs. Mary C. MacDonald
Knox, Ripley, ON

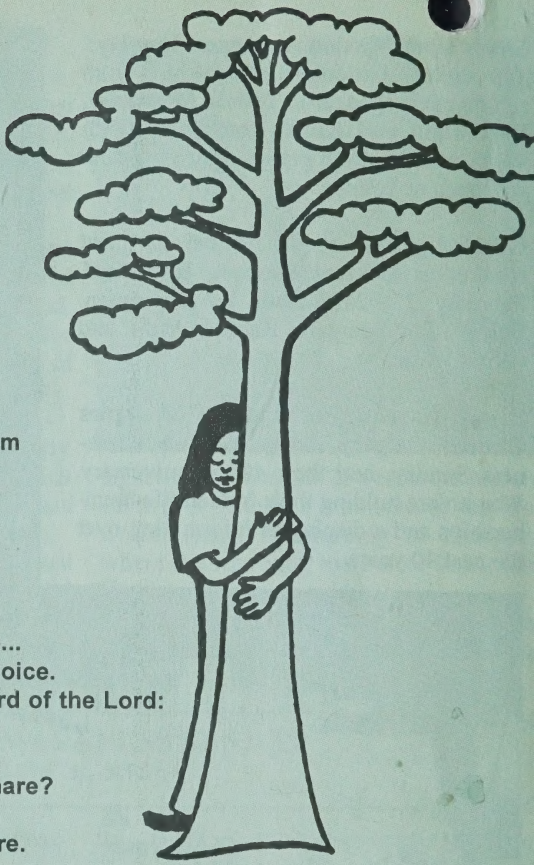
Donna Tannahill
Paterson Memorial,
Sarnia, ON

Mrs. Vera Cline
St. John's, White Rock, BC

Marion Mildred Smith
Knox, Windsor, ON

Mabel Hopson
Woodstock, ON
(formerly of St. Mary's, ON)

Landmine Ban



Land, mine
Says the Lord,
A land made to sustain
My people,
To grow grain
For their food.
Land, mine,
Meant for good.

Landmine,
Says the War Lord,
Made to kill and maim
The people,
To give pain,
Understood.
Landmine,
Profit good.

Land... mine...
There's a choice.
Hear the word of the Lord:
My people,
A landmine,
Or ploughshare?
On earth
Sow with care.

Landmine.
There's a voice
For world peace, not warfare.
Oh, people,
Hear the bells
Everywhere
On earth.
Show we care.

Elizabeth Symon

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